Library of the Theological Seminary,
PRINCETON, N. J.

Division BS2421
Section B51
Number
Shelf

Nisbet's Theological Library.

THE

MENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

OF THE

LORD JESUS CHRIST.

BY THE

REV. HENRY NORRIS BERNARD, M.A., LL.B.

LONDON:

JAMES NISBET & CO., 21 BERNERS STREET.

MDCCCLXXXVIII.

PREFACE.

THE essays contained in the present volume were, with one exception, originally written for the *Homiletic Magazine*. Although from the necessity of the mode of publication each essay had to be in itself complete, the papers were intended from the first to form a connected whole. Before pen was put to paper, the plan on which it was to be written was determined, and the result aimed at was a book, and not a number of separate and distinct magazine articles.

The object of the writer was to make such a study of the mental characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ as to place before the mind of the reader a true perception and clear idea of the divine-human personality of the Saviour. Sometimes a single mental quality has been taken and traced out in the Lord Jesus; sometimes His

words or acts have been considered, as they threw light upon the character of His mind; an attempt has been made to trace the motives which lay at the root of the miracles of Christ, and their reaction upon Himself; the temptations have been studied, as they illustrated the principles which guided, and the feelings which moved the Son of Man. Christ has been regarded under the influence of strong mental depression, because mental depression is a malady to which high-wrought and sensitive natures are peculiarly susceptible; and a chapter has been added upon the physical weariness of the Lord Jesus, inasmuch as nervous exhaustion reacts upon the mind, and the spiritual nature cannot be understood if the physical condition be a sealed book. We have watched the Saviour as He prayed to the God who is His Father, as He is our Father, remembering that the human need was strong in Him, as it is in the men we know; we have followed Him to Gethsemane and Golgotha, because in the agony of the garden, and in the passion of the Cross, a study of character was afforded, which could not be found elsewhere; and we have not failed to note that, after the Resurrection, it was

still the same Christ who manifested Himself to the disciples, as it was the same Saviour, who, at the Ascension, was exalted with great glory to the right hand of the Father.

While these essays have had to do mainly with the human side of Christ's character, the Divine nature, which the flesh veiled, was never lost sight of. To the writer Theism itself appears to rest on the acceptance of the Divinity of Christ. Science asks whether it is not as easy to believe in an eternal something as in an eternal Person. It inquires what proof there is, or indeed can be, that, apart from the small sphere in which man moves, purpose and will exist combined with intelligence, and demands whether the idea of God is not simply the projected shadow of man's consciousness upon the cloudland of fancy. To these questions many replies have been given; but I cannot but think that the best reply—certainly the one which brings most assurance to my own mind—is the life which Christ led upon earth. If Christ—His person, His mission, His work—is real; if the story as it is told by the Evangelists is substantially true; then in *it* is found the best evidence for the existence of God. The God,

whom science tells us is unknowable, is revealed in Jesus Christ. Again, there is the doubt raised by moral issues—the doubt of God's goodness. The terrible facts which meet us in daily life, and the apparently harsh laws which govern the universe with pitiless insensibility to pain, are apt to engender misgivings in the minds of those to whom the very thought of scepticism is hateful. But these misgivings are greatly laid to rest, when we contemplate the goodness and mercy of Christ, and call to mind that He is the express image of the Father. Doubts and difficulties, we may be sure, there will always be. The moral enigma, and the intellectual puzzle, are alike hard to solve. But while we cannot hope that the solution will be complete, while indeed Scripture itself asserts that belief is based on faith and not on knowledge, we need not fear the attacks of scepticism. The life of Christ is intellectually the greatest miracle; morally it is an enigma which neither rationalism, nor mythical theories, can explain; historically it is a fact with which unbelief must reckon; and the life of Christ proves, that not chance, not impersonal law, but a Divine Person, rules and governs the universe. The proof that Christ's

nature was Divine lies, so it appears to me, in the pages of the Gospels; and did we regard it from this point of view only, the life of Christ would abundantly repay all the study that could be bestowed upon it.

But to the Christian that Life means infinitely more. In its study, nor argument, nor criticism, nor controversy, can ever be the main purpose. For Christ is the one centre of the Christian's affections and the paramount object of his love. He is the "chiefest among ten thousand." In the name of Christ for the believer is summed up all hope, all desire, all love. He is his sure Friend; his abiding Refuge; his Redeemer from every ill; his Saviour from the power of sin. By the grace of Christ he is enabled to overcome evil; in the strength of Christ he is strong to conquer Satan. For him there is no question whether life is worth living, for the life is lived in Christ, and is consecrated, as a sacrifice, to His service; death is without terrors, for it is but passing to be with Christ. For the believing Christian Christ is all. Worship and adoration are laid at His feet; devotion and praise are brought to do him homage. To magnify His

name, to set forth His glory, above all to be filled with the fulness of His love, is of all existence the great object.

If my book shall in any measure aid in accomplishing this; if it shall lead any burdened soul to Him who can give rest; if it shall induce any doubting soul to lay his doubts on Him who can give faith; if it shall cause any tempted soul to seek strength from Him who suffered from the tempter's power, or any sinful soul to fly to Him who alone can give help and pardon; if, by its means, those who read shall be brought into closer sympathy with Christ,—then it shall abundantly subserve its purpose.

HENRY N. BERNARD.

Ripple Rectory, *January* 1888.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. THE CHRIST	1
II. THE MENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST	17
III. THE STYLE AND MANNER OF CHRIST'S TEACHING	36
IV. THE TEMPTED CHRIST	52
V. CHRIST WORKING MIRACLES	76
VI. THE PHYSICAL WEARINESS OF CHRIST	99
VII. THE MENTAL DEPRESSION OF CHRIST	119
VIII. THE HOME LIFE OF CHRIST	141
IX. THE PRAYERS OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST	160
X. THE THOUGHTFULNESS OF CHRIST	186
XI. THE MORAL STRENGTH OF CHRIST'S CHARACTER	211
XII. CHRIST'S NEED OF SYMPATHY	231
XIII. THE AGONY OF GETHSEMANE, AND THE PASSION, AS A STUDY OF CHARACTER	252
XIV. THE MANIFESTATIONS OF THE RISEN CHRIST	272
XV. THE APPEARANCES OF THE ASCENDED LORD	290
XVI. CONCLUSION	311

THE

MENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

I.

THE CHRIST.

"THE beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God," are the words with which St. Mark opens the book in which he gives us his memoir of the Saviour. On each page of each separate Gospel there rests the glory of the Divine majesty of Christ. It is not that the Evangelists, with the exception perhaps of St. John, wrote with the express design of showing that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Son of God, but that the Divine effulgence of the Godhead is ever piercing through the veil of the humanity which Christ had adopted. There is scarcely a recorded action of the Lord, which, all unconsciously as it were, is not impressed with the divinity which dwelt within Him. Formal proof, indeed, of Christ's eternal Godhead is there. It can be gathered

from the pages of the Synoptists with as clear distinctness as from the words of St. John, or from the utterances of the Apostles in their epistles. But it is not the formal proof which carries conviction home to the heart of the reader. It is the unconscious testimony which carries the greater weight. It is that the portrait presented is greater, nobler, more divine, than that of any mortal man could be. Plato has swayed the world of thought more than any other man, unless it be his rival Aristotle; but there is nothing superhuman in the writings of Plato, nor is Socrates presented to us in a godlike form. Mohammed stands almost alone in the power which a man has exercised over the religious convictions of the world; but there is nothing divine about the prophet of Arabia. He who more than others approaches to Christ in his devotion and self-sacrifice, and who, like Christ, appeals to our affections as none other ever has done, is Gautama, the founder of Buddhism; but even the Buddha, incarnation of Deity as his followers regard him, has not the stamp of divinity about him which rests upon the brow of Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ stands alone. He is unique in history. No one can be compared to Him. The very sceptics veil their faces before a

Divine glory, which, while they refuse to recognise, they cannot prevent themselves from feeling.

It is on the Godhead of Christ that Christianity rests as on its sure foundation. Not because He is the greatest Teacher the world has ever heard; not because He was inspired with an "enthusiasm of humanity" which no other had ever felt; nor because He propounded a system of morals such as before Him men had never dreamed of; not because He showed an utter devotion such as never has been paralleled; not because He counted not His life dear to Him, and in His self-sacrificing love offered it freely for mankind; not for reasons such as these, noble though they be, has the doctrine of Christ become the religion of the world; but because, as the Son of God, He is "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God," have churches been built to His praise, and cathedrals been reared to His honour, and do we this day call ourselves Christians.

It is not on the Divine nature of Christ that our attention is to be fixed; it is not with the glory of the eternal Godhead that our thoughts are to be occupied. The subject of these Essays is the Human Nature of the Son of Man. We are to look upon the Christ who emptied Himself of His glory, and took upon Him the form of a

servant, and was found in fashion as a man, and humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; but whom, for His very humility, God hath highly exalted, and given unto Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. As before Him angels veil their faces, as before His throne saints cast their crowns in lowly adoration, so in profoundest humility would we exalt and worship Him who is above all thrones, and principalities, and powers, ere we venture to turn our gaze upon the other aspect of our dear Saviour, and contemplate Him in the form which for our sake He was willing to become—the Man Christ Jesus.

The divinity of Christ is all important to the believer; but the humanity of Christ is, if possible, even more precious. Because Christ is God, we can rely upon His power; because Christ is man, we can rest upon His sympathy. None but the Lord Jesus Christ—the Son of God—could have made the atonement for man's sin; the Son of God alone could by His one oblation of Himself have offered a "full, perfect, and sufficient sacri-

fice" for the sin of the whole world; the Son of God, the co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, alone could give that complete security of forgiveness and reconciliation on which man can rest with perfect trust. But it is the Man Christ Jesus, who, being "born of the Virgin Mary," was made flesh; and dwelling among us, and as a man, shared in human pains and human joys, and so appeals to our hearts. Not through any exercise of the Divine omnipotence, not through the power of the Godhead, but by His own experience "He knows what man is like;" and having been Himself tried in all points as we are, He is able to succour those who are tempted. The great High Priest, looking back upon His own earthly life, and remembering His own sorrows and temptations, remembering even the sin which was all around Him, though it could not touch Him in His own person, liveth ever to intercede for His people as no other could, because He is touched with the feeling of their infirmities.

The Gospels present us with a perfect picture of the Man Christ Jesus. Two of the Evangelists have recorded events of His early life. It is worth noting how true the incidents are to the Divine idea of the Christ. The babe lying in the manger-cradle at Bethlehem is but a babe. He

performs no wonders; He works no portents. In the myth the infant Hercules forecasts his future by strangling the snakes which invaded his cradle. Christ is helpless as any other babe of earth. There are portents. There are wonders. But they lie outside His consciousness. They are about Him and around Him, but in His own person He has nothing to do with them. It is the angels who are active and moved at that unique time in which the Son of God is born into the world. They announced the wonder of the miraculous conception to the Virgin-Mother; they allayed Joseph's surmisings, and silenced his doubts; they declared His office by enouncing the name by which He shall be called; they proclaimed the glorious birth to the shepherds; they brought Him adoration, bursting into songs of praise as they ascribe glory to God and peace to men. But the babe is passive. Or, later in the story, it is the marvellous appearance of the star, which notify to men gazing from the watch-towers of their observatory that some wondrous child, different from other children of earth, had seen the light. It is the adoration of the wise men, coming from the far East, in order that they may bring their symbolical gifts of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, to the new-born Christ.

It is the senseless rage of the cruel Herod, mad with jealousy and fear. These are the things which gather round the cradle of the child, pointing Him out as the Messiah. Rays of light streaming in from the invisible world as harbingers of the Light which should lighten the world; foreshadowings from the sensible creation of that yearning after better things which should hereafter gather all longing and expectant souls beneath the shadow of the Cross.

So also with the one incident recorded of Christ's boyhood. There are indications of the Divine glory. For the most part they lie in the external surroundings, but not entirely. The boy of twelve years old is not unconscious as was the new-born child. The efflux of the Godhead is stirring within Him, though He knows it not. The instinct of the relationship between Himself and the Father is called into life by the Temple and its worship. It is quite in accordance with the recognised law of human development, that an external circumstance should awaken with apparent suddenness the revelation of His own true being, for which the teaching He had up to that time received had prepared the way. His mother, as we know from the song of the Annunciation, was well versed in the Old Testament

scriptures, and her mind was well stored with the poetry which was her people's heritage. She could not have failed to be a wise, as well as a loving, instructress to her boy, around whose childhood so many memories were gathered. From her lips, and at her knee, He would have heard of the hopes of His nation, and of that kingdom of David which should one day fill all the world with its spiritual domination. At the synagogue school the Holy Child would hear much that was puerile, and a mass of rabbinical learning which was calculated to hide the Divine truth; but in those schools the basis of all teaching was the law which God had revealed; and from that treasury of knowledge many a sentence, many a precept, many a magnificent passage of the prophets, would sink into the boy's heart—precious seed waiting only till the fulness of the time should come to germinate. And how many thoughts would this, His first journey to Jerusalem, the Holy City, where was His Father's House, raise in His mind? He was passing out of childhood into youth; He was being made "a son of the law;" He was taking upon Himself those responsibilities to the requirements of religion from which He had been up to this time absolved. Such a time, such an occasion, could

but call forth in Him ideas which He had never known before; and could hardly fail to make Him conscious of that divinity which dwelt, veiled, within Him. Equally natural was it that with the exciting cause the effect produced should to a great extent disappear. The consciousness, awakened for a moment, was for a time lost. He became once more almost, and in all outward appearance, the simple son of His reputed parents. "He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them."

The account of the Lord's childhood and youth is given by men who wrote "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." They wrote, not according to their own ideas of fitness, but according to the things which happened. One theory of Christianity is that it is a myth which has arisen out of the consciousness of good men and wise men as to what should have been. Christianity, according to this theory, is the developed wisdom and goodness of the world. The Apocryphal Gospels of the infancy are very useful in showing what man's imagination invented. The accounts given in them are in singular contrast to the inspired Evangelists. The comparison is very significant, whether we regard the utterances or the silence of St. Matthew and St. Luke. The childhood of

Christ was as the childhood of other children. But in the Apocryphal Gospels it is full of wonders. He is at play with His companions, and they are modelling animals in clay; but the animals which the child Jesus makes are able to walk, and His birds fly into the air. And some of the stories are not so harmless. What a contrast to the unconscious babe which St. Matthew portrays, or to the boy, thirsting after the heavenly knowledge in His Father's house, whom St. Luke describes!

In making a study of the human nature of the Lord Jesus, with all its human mental characteristics, it is of importance to observe the lines on which the story of His life is written, and to mark the principle by which, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Evangelists were guided. And nowhere is this principle brought into such distinct relief as in the account furnished of Christ's infancy and youth. The two thoughts in the minds of the writers, which are ever converging and interlacing, are in this part of their narrative kept more distinct. On the one hand the Word made flesh—the human son of the human mother; and on the other the eternal Son of God, "not made, nor created," but existent from all eternity, the co-equal with the Father. In the man, arrived at mature age, the union of the two

natures would so form one perfect personality, that in every act or word the most human, there would be found something of the Divine; while, on the other hand, in those deeds and utterances which were most Divine, something of the human would appear. But in the boy, and in the child, the Divine Godhead was, as it were, latent. In the early days of childhood there was no consciousness whatever; the glory of the Godhead was confined entirely to external circumstances. During the time of boyhood the internal testimony to the inward light is suggested, rather than called into actual being, in the mind of Jesus.

And one other point must not fail to be noticed. The Evangelists themselves are unconscious. They are troubled by no theories; they have no special doctrines to maintain; they never give a thought as to what impression they will leave upon the reader's mind. They never invite attention to the Divine being of Him whose portrait they were drawing. It never seems to have entered their ideas that any one could cavil or could doubt. They seem to live and to move in an atmosphere where controversy had no existence. Much of this simplicity of spirit may, humanly speaking, be traced to the simplicity of the faith in which the very early Christians lived. They had not

learned to analyse, or to question. God doubtless ordered it so, in order that the legacy of Christ's life should be handed down to the Church unwarped by man's prejudices and discussions. But whatever may have been the cause, the fact remains. The Evangelists, especially those whom we call the Synoptists, describe Christ as He actually appeared to them. He appeared to them as a man. He was in form and fashion as a man. He spoke and acted as a man. He had man's wants and necessities. He ate, He drank, He became weary, He slept, He was sad, as men sometimes are sad. Longings swept over His soul, as men long sometimes. And appearing to them as a man, they draw the picture of a man. The traces of His divinity are incidental—I had almost said accidental. They are there, because they were in Him, and therefore they entered into the picture. They were there, in Him; and the picture is true and faithful, and so the Divine glory rests upon the page. But it is there without conscious intention. I do not think that in any miracle, the miracle itself, as a sign of Christ's Godhead, is dwelt on by the Evangelist, or made the chief point. And if not in the miracles, much less in any other performance of Christ. It is no mean proof of the Godhead of the Lord Jesus

Christ, that so far as the Gospels—especially the three first Gospels—are concerned, the proof is incidental and indirect. The writers were not careful to prove, or even to bring into prominence, what in their minds was a matter of such perfect belief that it never entered into their conception that any reader of their memoirs could doubt.

These remarks apply, perhaps, only in part to the Fourth Gospel. That was written later. The age of controversy was beginning. Those questions, which were afterwards to rend Christendom, were beginning to make themselves heard. There is every reason to believe that St. John[1] had seen the writings of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke; and that, to a certain extent, he did write his Gospel as supplementary to theirs. Accordingly in the Fourth Gospel the doctrine of Christ's divinity is stated in a manner different to that of the other three Gospels. In the prologue it is stated doctrinally, with authority. And throughout the whole of the Johannean Gospel, the thought of Christ's divinity is consciously present to the mind of the writer. He

[1] Let me state once for all that I do not purpose to touch upon the points which modern scepticism has raised, such as the authorship of the Fourth Gospel, or the possibility of miracles. Let me say, once for all, that, for the purpose of these studies, I assume the accepted belief of Christianity as true.

knows there are adversaries and disputants. He is aware, to quote from the tradition which is thoroughly in accordance with St. John's character, that there is an enemy of God, and that he must hasten from the baths lest he be involved in his destruction. Yet the same spirit animates all the Gospels. Controversy never becomes bitter, or personal, or even positive, as in the epistles of St. Peter, or as in St. Paul's writings. There is a check laid upon the fiery nature of the son of thunder which restrains him. The personality of the Lord Jesus, with its pervading spirit, overrules His Apostle's proper bent. He too spake as he was moved, may we not say as he was restrained, by the Holy Ghost. And so it comes to pass, that the picture of the Saviour is as distinctly and beautifully human in the Fourth Gospel as in the third. Even more may be said. St. John carries to our hearts the compassion, and sympathy, and tenderness of the human Saviour, even more forcibly than St. Luke himself. The raising of Lazarus at Bethany is, if possible, more full of tender pathos than the revival of the young man, the only son of his mother, at the gate of Nain. And what was said just before of the miracles is true for the Fourth Gospel as for the others. In the first miracle, it is

not the narrative itself, but a note of the writer of the Gospel, which draws special attention to the fact that the turning the water into wine at Cana was a manifestation of Christ's glory.

The Evangelists, then, in their Gospels give us a perfect picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. They portrayed Him as they actually beheld Him. He was to them one whom they had heard, whom they had seen with their eyes, whom they had looked upon, and their hands had handled. In the case of St. Luke this hearing and beholding would, in all probability, be mental only. But in the case of all it was true. The early story would be that of the Virgin-Mother, who kept all these things of those young happy days with her First-born, and treasured them in her heart. During the days of His ministry, Matthew, and John, and Peter (for St. Mark) were His constant associates and companions, while St. Luke set in order a declaration of the things delivered him by those who were eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word. And so it could not be but that the picture presented to us should be indeed that of the Saviour in the perfect oneness of His divine-human personality; but also, inasmuch as He whom they drew was living with them as their Master and their Friend, it would also necessarily (as we

speak) come to pass that the traits most prominently brought into relief, and the acts most strikingly set before us, would be those of the Man Christ Jesus. God has so ordained in His wisdom; and I think that in this we may understand and recognise His wisdom, and see in it a thing for which we may be infinitely thankful. For by this means the Lord is brought into close fellowship with us; He becomes to us, as of old to His disciples, our Master and Friend, one in whom we may confide, one to whom we may take our sorrows and our tears, one in whom we may trust wholly, without fear.

One additional word may be said about the miracles of Christ. The miracles are *to us* more suggestive of power than are the ordinary acts of life. One great writer made an attempt—eminently successful in his day—to rest the truth of Christianity upon the miracles. Time has taught us greater wisdom. The truth of Christianity rests upon Christ, not upon the miracles of Christ. The miracles, indeed, must ever remain what the Evangelists call them—signs; the external manifestations of Christ's inherent glory. But they are more than this. They are manifestations of His pity and compassion; of His sorrow for man's sin; of His sympathy with

man's sufferings. Through them all runs the golden chord of that humanity the adoption of which was the realisation of the Saviour's love. That is something better than His glory. In this sense we would read them. Of necessity they must enter into any study of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are very precious to the Church as giving an insight into the mind and character of the Saviour. They are truly signs of the Divine glory; but, although signs, they are not more Divine than what we should call His everyday actions; they do not bear a greater impress of the glory of the Godhead than His words. The whole life of Christ—not any part of it in particular—is stamped with the hall-mark of His divinity. And, on the other hand, the whole life of Christ—every part of it alike—is human to the core.

II.

THE MENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The object of the present paper is an attempt to spell out something of the grace and beauty of the character and mental disposition of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As St. Mark in the opening of his Gospel impresses upon his readers that his memoir is the Evangel of the Son of God, so St. John reminds those to whom he wrote that the glory which men beheld in Christ, was the glory of the only-begotten of the Father. But in fixing the attention on the character of Christ, it is with the human nature, which the Son of Man adopted, that we have more particularly to do. The characteristics on which our thoughts are to be fixed are the *human* characteristics of the Lord. In taking upon Him man's nature, Christ took upon Him all that is human in man. In the Lord Jesus Christ there was all that we think of,

when, in its best sense, we use the word human. Everything that is good, or praiseworthy, or noble, or lovable in man, was found in its highest perfection in Jesus Christ. Think of all the persons whose names history has handed down; is there any among them so human as was Christ? Call to mind all the heroes ever read of in romance; is there any that can for one moment be compared with Christ? There is no need to point out that nearly all the goodness and virtue which ennobles man at the present time, is due largely to the example of Christ and to His teaching. If the noblest of the old Greeks could be revived—men such as Plato or Demosthenes—with their idea of morality unchanged, they would not be tolerated in our midst. Francis Newman once attempted to draw a comparison between the Lord Jesus Christ and Fletcher of Madeley. No one—not the author himself—ever cared to revert to the illustration. But even had any comparison been possible, was not Christ the very source from which the nobility and beauty of character of such men as St. Francis Xavier, or Fletcher of Madeley, was derived. It was because they were disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, that something of the glory and grace of His character was reflected in them.

If we regard the Lord from the human point of view, His sinlessness was the most marked characteristic. It was the most marked, because it was the one characteristic which is found in no other child of Adam. History, experience, and conscience alike bear witness to the truth of the assertion of David, that there is none righteous, no, not one, and to the testimony of St. Paul, that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Christ is the only exception. What man, standing front to front with his virulent enemies, could venture to look them boldly in the face, and demand: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" And it is not only to the record that Christians can appeal. It is not only that there are four memoirs of the Saviour's life, in which His doings and sayings are recorded, and that in none of them is there any trace of sin to be found. These records have been examined with that scrupulous care which only hostility can inspire, in the hope that some flaw could be discovered. But the search has been in vain. If any sin were discoverable in Christ; if in Him could be found any evil which men could recognise; if any acknowledged fault could be traced in His life,—it would not be long before the world heard of it. Such an imputation

on Christ's character would not long be confined to the knowledge of either scholars or sceptics, but the alleged discovery would be in all men's mouths. The only thing I ever heard of was Newman's famous discovery that Christ was too hard on religious hypocrites![1] But it is not only that the *record* represents Him as sinless. We can go behind the record. How is it that four persons, mentally very differently constituted, were able to present us with the portrait of a sinless Man? Christ is portrayed in His public life, and He is shown to us in the privacy of familiar intercourse with His friends. We see Him in His home at Nazareth, and we are with Him in the turbulent scenes of the capital. We listen to the angry taunts of His adversaries, and we view Him irritated by their cavils and hardness beyond any endurance except His own. We sail with Him on the still waters of the Lake of Galilee, and we share His quiet rest at Bethany. His scanty joys are told us. His hours of sorrow are laid bare. The moments

[1] Sceptical literature cannot speak too highly of the character of the Christ in which it refuses to believe. I speak of books by men of learning and acknowledged repute. There are in the purlieus of licentious literature, scurrilous publications which do not hesitate to attack Christ's moral character. They are best left to the low darkness to which they properly belong.

of His deepest depression are unveiled. Yet throughout the continuance of His troubled life —in all circumstances, no matter how difficult, under all trials, no matter how disturbing—these four writers have contrived to present a portrait untouched by sin. Had not Christ been without sin, could any skill of the Evangelists have availed to represent Him as sinless?

There is another point in connection with the sinlessness of Jesus well worthy of notice. The characters which pose as perfect are not, as a rule, those whom we like the most. Only too often "he is all fault, who hath no fault at all." For us, as for Guinevere,

> The low sun makes the colour,

and those we love

> Must have a touch of earth.

Very good people are apt to be repellent. Perhaps it were not difficult to assign a reason. But who would have Christ other than He is? About Him there is nothing repellent. *His* goodness never makes us turn away impatiently. *His* sinlessness never provokes a feeling of irritation, nor jars as with a discordant note. His perfection is in the thought of all men perfect. His sinlessness

is a new charm added to the perfect grace of His human character. Who can read the story of the sinless Christ, and desire that anything should be changed in act He ever did, or wish that anything should be altered in word He ever spoke! The story of that life goes straight to our hearts. All must recognise that here is One made to be loved.

Perhaps the reason of this exceeding lovableness in the Saviour lies in the second trait to which attention may be directed—the sympathy of Jesus. Sympathy means the power of putting oneself into another's place in such a manner as to feel as he feels. The Lord Jesus Christ understood all human feelings. All human pain, all human suffering, all human joy, was known to Him who was tried and tempted in all points like as we are. His perfect sympathy with the relations of life is shown in His first miracle. Few men, certainly no prophet of the Old Dispensation, and still more certainly no heathen philosopher, would have considered the occasion worthy of a miracle. It was only that the wine had run short at a marriage feast. Yet our Lord worked the miracle—worked on this occasion His first miracle. For He could feel, as though it had been His own, the shame and humiliation of the bridegroom; and He could enter into the disappointment and gloom which

such an accident would have cast over the early days of marriage. The lack of happy associations at a thing so commonplace as a wedding, might seem but of small importance to the philosopher or to the stern religious reformer, but it did not seem of small importance to Christ. He thought the occasion no unworthy one on which to manifest His glory by the performance of His first miracle. The same ready sympathy is shown in the miracle which followed immediately upon the Sermon on the Mount. The leper who came to be healed did not doubt Christ's power. But he was an outcast, a pariah, one whom all men avoided. He did not feel sure of Christ's willingness. Might not the Great Teacher feel disgust at his unclean condition, and repulsion at the sight of his loathsome sores? And Christ entered into the man's feelings, and was moved with compassion. Careless of the ceremonial defilement which the act involved, He put forth His hand, and healed him by a touch.

But the sympathy of Christ with all modes of human sorrow, showed itself so continuously in His every act and deed, that it is almost impossible to select illustrations. Every miracle is an example of the fellow-feeling of the Lord Jesus with man's pain. There are, however,

three miracles, similar in character, and manifesting, as we think, the highest energy of the Divine power, each of which brings into strong relief the mental quality we are considering. Three times our Lord recalled the life which had departed; and on each of these occasions the sympathy of Christ is so marked, that we almost lose sight of the miraculous power displayed in admiration of the thoughtful compassion which Christ showed. When Jairus came with his pitiful prayer: "Master, my little daughter is at the point of death, but lay Thine hands upon her, and she shall live," a gaping crowd gathered round, hoping to see a miracle. But Christ, overhearing the message that the child was dead, arrests, by one of those words or gestures which He used on more than one occasion, the curious people; and He suffered none to follow in the wake of the stricken father except His three chosen disciples. In the miracle by the gate of Nain, St. Luke is careful to make us understand, that sympathy for the childless widow is the predominant feeling in the Saviour's heart; the revival of the dead man carried out to his burial is almost a resulting accident. And once more. In reading the wonderful story enacted outside the little town of Bethany, has not every

mourner dwelt, with an ever-new sense of comfort, on the sympathy with man's sorrow which the Lord displayed, as, standing by the grave of Lazarus, Jesus wept warm, human tears!

The thought of Christ's love for children seems so in accordance with His character, that we never pause to think that it was anything unusual or uncommon. But we do not find, as a rule, earth's greatest men loving towards children. I do not remember to have read that Cæsar, or Charlemagne, or Charles the Fifth, were much interested in children. I never heard of Frederick the Great, or Napoleon, or even Carlyle, dangling children on their knees. I doubt if the widow's son was a playmate for Elijah. I do not think that St. Paul ever mentions children with any special tenderness. Luther, indeed, was an exception; in this he follows the Master whose honour he upheld so bravely. Even to the disciples, who more than others were acquainted with His ways and thoughts, it seemed an act unworthy of the Messiah's dignity that He should take the children into His arms to bless them. It is a thing well worthy of notice how often the Lord speaks of little children. He cites them as types of those worthy to enter into the kingdom of God. He instances them as examples of guilelessness. A

child is taken, and set in the midst of the disciples, in order to teach them humility. One of Christ's solemn warnings is suggested by the sight of children at their games. They are to be treated with reverence, because their angels behold the Father's face in heaven. Children's voices are welcome to Christ, and must not be silenced, as, attending His entry into Jerusalem, they shout their glad hosannas. Nay, we are told that whosoever receiveth the child in Christ's name, receiveth Christ Himself. If it had been otherwise: if Christ had passed by the children as other men pass them by, how much the world would have missed; how much of the exceeding beauty of the Saviour's character would have been lost to man.

The traits of our Lord's character on which we love most to dwell are His pity and compassion. These are never absent. They show themselves in every act. To attempt to illustrate Christ's pity would be but to repeat every detail of His life. Notice the difference between the miracles recorded in the Old Testament and those which Christ performed. Under the Old Dispensation, as often as not, they were punitive or vindictive. Miriam is stricken with leprosy; Elijah calls down heaven's fire to destroy his enemies; Elisha punishes his

servant by smiting him with disease; even in the New Testament, St. Paul uses his miraculous power to confound an adversary. But all Christ's miracles were works of pity and compassion. There is no exception. The fig-tree withered away; but its destruction was a sermon intended to save the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the ruin which would overtake them. The swine perished; but the miserable man possessed with the legion of devils was saved. And as with our Lord's acts, so with His spoken words. What can exceed the tender beauty of the parable of the sheep lost upon the mountains, which the shepherd, with joy at his heart, carries home on his weary shoulders; or the wonderful pathos of the story of the Prodigal Son, in which the interest is ever new, even though we know every word by heart.

The pity and compassion of Christ were the result of His unselfishness. In Christ there is no trace of selfishness. Selfishness is the Nessus-robe which clings to every human being. Christ alone was free from it. He ever forgot Himself. His own sufferings were forgotten in those of others. His fatigue and weariness were put aside for the sake of others. His own pain was not thought of, if another's distress needed alleviation. His own trials were lost sight of in the temptations

of His disciples. Let me take an example from St. Luke. The sun had set, and evening had fallen with its refreshing coolness. Then from every quarter they brought to the wonderful Healer the sick in order that He might cure their diseases. It had been so easy to heal all by one word of power. But a cure so wrought, whatever material benefit it might have conferred, would not have carried to the heart of these sick folk that spiritual lesson which it was the Lord's chief object to impart. So Christ has each case brought to Him singly. For each He has the word which He knew to be needed. To each individual sufferer He applied His healing touch. The Evangelist is careful to tell us that on that evening, although there were so many, "He laid His hand on every one of them." Or let St. John tell the story of Christ's self-forgetfulness. Weary and footsore, Christ had thrown Himself down by the well of Samaria, longing for a draught of the cool, refreshing water. But one had need of Him, and the Saviour lays aside all thought of Himself, in order that He may minister to another's want. This time it is not material benefit which is desired, but a soul, whose purity sin had soiled, needed to be awakened. From the neighbouring village a woman comes to draw.

The first word is prompted by Christ's natural want. He is thirsty after the long walk in the hot sun. "Give me to drink." First in her surprise, afterwards in the interest of the conversation, the woman passes by the request unheeded; and Christ will not interrupt the current of her thoughts to press His want upon her. His meat and drink were to do the will of the Father that sent Him. So He bears, as best He may, His thirst and weariness, and continues patiently talking with her, until, by the power of His word, He carries conviction to her heart.

But perhaps at no time was Christ's unselfishness and thought for others shown so vividly as in the last hours of His life. In the farewell words He speaks to His disciples there is no mention of His own coming pain, nor one single expression of self-pity; all His care is for them,—to give them the courage needed to sustain their drooping hearts, when their Master shall be taken from them. In the Garden of Gethsemane, as the traitor appears to apprehend Him, His first impulse is to save His followers. The last miracle of the Saviour's earthly life is to heal the ear of Malchus. On the weary way to Golgotha He finds His voice to comfort the women who bewail His coming death. As He hangs on the very

cross His prayer is for His murderers, and He promises salvation to the repentant thief. In His dying moments He collects His remaining strength in order to commend His mother to St. John.

From the unselfishness of Christ on the one side, flowed His pity and compassion; from another side, resulted the quietness and restfulness which are marked characteristics of His mental disposition. He was never flustered, never hasty, never impatient. Tried as no other ever had been tried, He never failed in calmness of spirit. The inhabitants of Nazareth, in their spiteful rage, would hurl Him headlong from the rock on which their city was built; Christ passes through their midst. From angry words the rabble at Jerusalem are proceeding to murderous deeds, and already the deadly stones are in their hands; Christ, by a word of calmness, stays their intent. He wakes from sleep to find the boisterous winds howling around Him, and the disciples —hardy fishermen as they were—paralysed with terror; with quiet power Christ speaks, and wind and wave hear and obey. Before the tribunal of the High Priest He maintains an undisturbed demeanour; before the judgment-seat of Pilate, in the calmness of conscious strength, He points

out to the arrogant judge that he is but the steward of that power which belongeth unto God.

Hitherto attention has been fixed on those qualities which are passive and feminine. In considering the mental attributes of the Saviour there is, perhaps, less disposition to dwell on the virile characteristics of His mind. But in these sterner traits of character Christ was not deficient. The Greeks long ago observed that the complete man must be possessed of the masculine and feminine qualities in due proportion; and so, in the Orphic hymn, Jupiter is represented as uniting both sexes in his own person. Men may be roughly divided into two types—the one represented typically by Elijah, the other by St. John. But our Lord was of no type; or rather, being the perfect Man, He united in Himself all types of men. We think of Him as of the St. John type; but it is not so; He is equally of the Elijah type; for in Him all the qualities, masculine and feminine, which go to make the complete man, are found. Courage and daring, and, if need were, sternness and indignant anger, showed themselves as decidedly as the more winning and loveable points of character. He could rebuke vice as strongly as John the Baptist: He could

convict of sin with a force as telling as that of any Old Testament prophet; and, in refraining from pronouncing condemnation on one already bowed down by shame, He could bid her sin no more. He could denounce hardened formalists and hypocrites with a severity which calls forth the condemnation of a modern critic; but when His enemies had obtained their end, and supposed that they had triumphed in His condemnation—when, unstirred by pity and unmoved by remorse, they stood beneath His cross gloating over the sufferings their evil machinations had brought about—then His only emotion was compassion for their hardness and an intense pity for the terrible doom impending over them. In the supremest moment of His awful suffering He forgets His own agony that He may pray for those who crucified Him: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

The study of the mental characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ is of the deepest importance, because the power of Christianity rests on the person of Christ. The atonement is the voluntary sacrifice of Christ. The Evangelists ever keep before our view the personality of the Saviour. The Gospels are memoirs of the person of the Son of Man. We can see, touch, and handle

Him. We can hear His voice; we can see, as it were, His very gestures. The Gospel is not the exposition of a doctrine, but the story of a life. Christianity is based, not so much upon a system of doctrines, as upon the person of Christ. The relationship between Christ and His people is a personal relationship. If Christianity is regarded as a system of doctrines, its doctrines, glorious as they may be, are mere empty husks unless there is in them the presence and power of a living personal Saviour. If Christianity is regarded as a great moral law—and what law was ever so beautiful in its purity, or majestic in its holiness as the Gospel—the moral law is powerless, unless, by union with the person of the Lawgiver, grace and strength is drawn to enable men to keep it. If Christianity is viewed as a means of redemption, the very object of redemption is to unite man, by the removal of sin, in living personal communion with God. The morality of the stoic philosophers could not regenerate the Roman Empire. The lofty ideals of the Platonists failed equally. It was Christianity which saved the world. It was Christ which saved the world. It was not the Sermon on the Mount, however far-reaching to the heart's lowest depths that sermon went. It was Christ,

the living, personal Saviour. His living influence, gaining to Himself man's affections, subdued the prevailing evils; His personal presence, felt and realised in men's hearts, regenerated society. Infanticide, gladiatorial shows, unnatural vices, slavery, torture, all the unutterable corruption of heathenism, fell before the Saviour hanging on the cross. And so St. Paul declares Christianity to be faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and so St. Peter declares that to the believer, the Christ, whom he has not seen, is precious; and so St. John sums up all Christian experience in the one word, "We love Him;" and so One greater than St. John, greater than St. Peter, greater than St. Paul, declares eternal life to be the knowledge of Himself: "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

III.

THE STYLE AND MANNER OF CHRIST'S TEACHING.

MANY volumes have been written on the words of Christ. But these many volumes have dealt almost exclusively with the meaning of Christ's utterances. Doubtless this is the main point. To know what Christ taught; to understand what He said; to search the significance of the Lord's words: these things are all important. For we must know the will of the Master before we can perform that will; and obedience to that will is the Saviour's own test of the love we bear Him.

But in the words there is something besides their actual meaning and significance; or, perhaps, I should say there is in them something by which their meaning and significance is brought home to us. One prophet of the older dispensation varies from another prophet. The style is different, even though in all the origin of the message, and the message itself, is one. From

Jeremiah the ready tears are never very far away; Isaiah delights in unfolding all the glories which shall be when the Messiah's kingdom should be manifested; Ezekiel, with occasional outbursts of soul-stirring tenderness, is as austere and gloomy as the Greek Æschylus. And as each of these prophets has his own style peculiar to himself, so the Lord Jesus Christ, making use of human language to express His thoughts, clothed those thoughts in words which were peculiar to Him, and in a style, which, insomuch that it is His style, must be well worth considering.

The object, then, of this essay is to consider the style and character of Christ's words—not their meaning or significance, but the manner in which Christ taught.

First of all may be noticed the sententious brevity of many of our Lord's utterances, and the profundity of thought which He enclosed in the fewest possible words. This can hardly fail to strike the most superficial reader of the Gospels. There are a number of short sayings, embodying in them great and universal truths, which have become like household words. They come to our minds like proverbs in daily use, or like the deep saying of some great poet which has burnt itself into the very being of the language. How we are

struck with the truth of such a saying as "To him that hath shall be given!" How thoroughly it answers to human experience! The man who has many friends is constantly gathering new friends around him. The rich man, almost in his own despite, is constantly adding to his wealth. The learned man finds ever new sources of knowledge at his command. And how equally true the saying is morally! The large-hearted man grows in kindness and benevolence. The charitable man finds his heart constantly expanding, and at the same time the objects of his loving solicitude make greater demands upon his liberality. While, alas! the converse also holds good. The cruel man grows in cruelty, he becomes more callous, more hardened, more indifferent to others' pain. And the mean man, or the sordid man, or the miser, are they not too continually adding to, and increasing their vices? Many other such words rise almost instinctively to the memory. "With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again." "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." "Ye cannot serve two masters." "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." It is not the meaning of the words to which it is desired to draw the

attention, but their sharp incisive comprehensiveness. How they, almost in a word, embody the great principles of Christ's Kingdom. How they are as goads and nails fastened by the master of the assembly. As the panorama of life passes before us, such words as these, remarkable equally for their brevity and their truth, come continually into our thoughts.

Next I would place the extreme simplicity of our Lord's words. The teaching of it was altogether new. The world had never heard anything like it before. And the philosophy of the Christian religion was the deepest that had ever been proclaimed. How deep it was may be seen in the fact, that the civilisation of the Western World, which is the boast of this nineteenth century, is its direct result. Yet this philosophy was expounded in the simplest language. There is scarcely a hard word in the Gospels. Not only was the language such that the most uninstructed could understand it, but the illustrations of the new teaching were drawn from the commonest objects. The flowers growing at the Saviour's feet, the birds flying over His head, the ploughman breaking up the clods of earth, the sower putting in the seed—it was by such things as these that Christ made His meaning clear. And

at the same time each illustration was full of beauty. It tended to raise and elevate the thought, at the same time that it guided it in a right direction. What can be more homely than the picture of the woman hiding the leaven in the flour, till the penetrating quality of the yeast should make the bread light and wholesome? And yet would not the very homeliness of the picture raise pleasant thoughts of home, with its quiet rest and peace, in the minds of the common people who gathered round the Saviour and heard Him gladly? The lilies, and the ripe corn waving in the sunlight, and the red clouds painted by the setting sun, are not all these emblems of beauty as well as illustrations of simplicity? Such was the teaching of Him, who, considered merely from a human standpoint, was the greatest teacher the world had ever seen.

In this connection the parables present themselves to the mind. At the moment, as it will be remembered, the parables were used to conceal the truth. It was on account of the hardness of their hearts that Christ taught the people by parables. But it was for the moment only. No mode of instruction could be better conceived for conveying information to the ignorant, and perhaps, to the instructed as well as the ignorant.

The slight story, touching as it did on some common everyday occurrence, would fasten itself in the memory. It would come back to the mind again and again, as the recurring circumstance recalled it to the recollection. Almost unconsciously, it would be thought of and pondered over, and thus truth, which is ever many-sided, would come to be viewed in new and varying lights. And it must not be lost sight of, that these parables, though for the moment hidden from the understanding of those who had not hearts to perceive, were expounded in private to the considerable group which formed the inner circle of Christ's adherents, and whom the Evangelists call the disciples. Even if at the time the meaning was not always clear, these parables are an eternal possession, the everlasting heritage of God's Church. We have the parables, and we have the key to unlock their signification. We know how the Greek slave lives in every one's memory because he invented the fable. But the parable is more beautiful, because more congruous, than the fable. Of course it is not pretended that our Lord invented the parable. It had existed from the time of which we have any record. It was in fact a mode of instruction constantly used by the Jewish Rabbis. But Christ made this style of teaching

peculiarly His own. He specially adopted it as the vehicle in which to convey His instruction. "Without a parable spake He not unto them." And we may see how strong a hold the parable has taken upon men's minds by the numberless allegories and parables from nature which have been written since Christ taught. The parable, which charmed our childish fancy, contains in itself deep stores of wisdom, now that in our riper age we are better able to appreciate its deeper meaning.

To simplicity of style Christ added simplicity of matter. If you would form some idea of the teaching of the period, read a page or two of the Talmud. There you will find discussed how God employs His time in heaven; the answer being that He is engaged in teaching young Jews to read. There you will find it gravely argued how much space an angel occupies; one Rabbi declaring that ten thousand could dance on the point of a needle. There you will find that a Rabbi imagined he was discussing a great moral question, when he considered whether a man in the desert might use sand for his ceremonial ablutions. How different was the teaching of Christ. We may well suppose, that, like all the Jewish youths, He had attended the schools

attached to the synagogues. There He could hardly fail to have been introduced to the casuistical questions which were the special feature of the degenerate age in which He lived. Yet they left scarcely an impression on His mind. Except on special occasions, and for special purposes, our Lord never adopted such a style of argumentation. He used it, as we shall see presently, only as a weapon of defence against His adversaries. In His usual teaching He puts aside, with an almost contemptuous scorn, all the puerilities in which the Jewish mind delighted, and lays down great guiding principles of truth and morality suited alike to all people and to all time. To take a single instance as an example, He sums up the Law in the single word of love —love to God, and love to one's neighbour; and He comprehends all social virtues, and all social duties, in the one single precept of doing unto others as you would they should do unto you.

As our Lord taught simplicity of matter in simplicity of style, so did He teach His heavenly doctrines to simple minds. It was the common people who heard Him gladly. Other teachers addressed themselves almost exclusively to the noble and the rich. The Jewish Rabbis collected around them the young men of exclusive families

as their scholars. The greatest of all the Greek sages had for his pupils the principal youths of Athens. But Christ addressed Himself to the poor. When John the Baptist sent to inquire whether He were the Messiah, to such Messianic signs as healing the sick and raising the dead, that of preaching to the poor is added:—"To the poor the Gospel is preached." And so, while the rich and happy passed Him by, the wretched, and the miserable, and the fallen, and the sinful, came to Him; just as to-day, and in the days of all time, the weary ones and heavy laden, the troubled and the sorrowing, come to place themselves under the sheltering shadow of His cross. To the simple His first words of blessing were spoken:—"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." On the ears of the sad and unhappy, the words of benediction fall as the tender dew:—"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

Another peculiarity of Christ's teaching is the fewness of the words He utters. Each word which Christ pronounces has its distinct emphatic meaning. And there is no word which has not its meaning. There is no reiteration in our Lord's teaching. He does not even, as human teachers often find they must do, clothe His ideas

in different language, as if He would by that means impress them upon the mind. But He speaks once, with authority and power; and then He leaves the weighty word to produce the effect He intended, and to fulfil the purpose He designed it to accomplish. The Sermon on the Mount was doubtless a long sermon, but how full of significance is each word. In two or three chapters of St. Matthew all the principles of Christ's teaching are laid down. If you would see how concise our Lord's teaching is, read a single paragraph from this sermon; rewrite it in your own words, and then, counting the number of words you have used, compare them with the number in the text. So in all His miracles; the words actually needed are spoken; no superfluous words are added. So in all the parables; by one or two graphic touches the whole is presented as a picture before our eyes. The parable of the Sower is told in six short verses; the beautiful story of the healing of the Leper is contained in three verses; the whole history of the Prodigal Son occupies but twenty-one. Where else shall we find a teacher using so few words?

One thing specially noteworthy in our Lord's style is the absence of rhetorical language. Our Lord never aimed at effect. He spoke with

authority. He never attempted to gain by graces of diction that which He never failed to obtain by the power and force of thought which His words possessed. With Him the thought is everything; the words are nothing; except that there is ever, as must be necessarily, perfect congruity between the idea and its expression. We may compare the Lord Jesus Christ in this respect with His servant St. Paul. In the Epistles of St. Paul we have occasionally splendid flights of rhetoric. It is enough to instance such passages as 1 Cor. iv. 9–15, in which in strong satirical language he describes his Apostolical position; or 1 Cor. xv. 42 *seq.*, in which he describes the glory of the resurrection. Such passages abound in the Apostle's writings. But in the Lord's words and discourses this element of rhetoric is almost absolutely wanting. The nearest approach to it is in Matt. xxiii.—the passage in which in burning words of indignation He denounces the formality, and lays bare the hypocrisy of the religious cheat and pretender. When we come to study the life of the Saviour, when we meditate on His words in order to penetrate to the very heart of the Redeemer, how the peaceful calmness of the nature, which manifests itself in the spoken language, appeals to our minds. How in the

repose of quiet strength, which pervades every utterance, rest is given unto us! The absence of rhetoric is not only a distinguishing mark of the words which have been preserved to us in the Gospels; it is much more than this. It is something which soothes the disturbed mind, or stills the unquiet spirit, in a manner for which we may rejoice and be thankful. Yet it could not be otherwise. For must not the words of Christ be the mirror reflecting the image and nature of Christ? Rhetoric could find no place in the pure and holy calmness of His spirit.

In considering our Lord's style and manner of speech, it must not be forgotten that Christ did occasionally adopt the rabbinical custom of casuistry, to which we have already referred. It was His defensive weapon against His foes. When His adversaries came with their subtle questions, asked, so far as the people would comprehend, in good faith, and for information, but in reality hiding a deadly purpose, He turned their attack, and foiled them with their own chosen armoury. He answered the fool—the word is used in its biblical sense, the wicked—He answered the fool according to his folly. But, unlike the Rabbis, the grave instruction of the great Teacher was ever added on to the sophistry

of the dialectician. Thus when the Pharisees and Herodians entered on an unholy alliance, either to ruin His reputation with the populace, or to deliver Him to the judgment of the Roman Governor, after foiling their wicked attempt, He adds the word which sums up religious politics for all time: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's." The insidious inquiry concerning divorce is used as an occasion to enforce the sanctity and permanence of the marriage tie. The Sadducees, coming with a question which to them appeared to show the absurdity of a resurrection and a future life, are made use of to prove, in a manner which would commend itself to the Rabbis themselves, the truth of the doctrine they denied. But when a lawyer, half to try Him, but also half in earnest, asks Him which is the greatest commandment, He rises above all the quibbles of the schools, and enforces the two great duties which include all commandments, and are the fulfilment of all obedience; namely, love to God, and love to the person with whom one is for the moment in contact. Then at last He turns the tables upon His adversaries, and, under the form of a rabbinical discussion, asks the momentous question which

it is the object of Christianity itself to answer: "What think ye of Christ?"

Every critic has pointed out the difference of style in the discourses preserved by the Synoptical Evangelists, and those which St. John has embalmed in his Gospel. For the most part the occasions on which they were uttered were very dissimilar. To Nicodemus, the ruler of the Jews, our Lord would naturally speak in a manner very different from that which He adopted in addressing the peasant crowds which gathered round Him on the hillside, or on the borders of the Lake of Gennesaret. Excepting that Christ spoke more openly of His Divine mission, and that the conversation was of a personal character, the style in which He addressed the woman of Samaria was in entire accordance with that He used in Galilee. From the outward and sensible He led her on to consider the inward and spiritual. It must ever be remembered that it was St. John's purpose to supplement the Galilean Gospels; and perhaps from the bent of his own character the Apostle would seize upon the deeper teaching of his Master, and preserve those sayings which poured light upon the person of Christ, His Divine mission as the Son of God, and His spiritual work upon the heart and conscience of the individual. The

discourses, too, were spoken under peculiar conditions. It was not simple minds listening reverently to the teaching of the Master, but a turbulent crowd, ever breaking in with irrelevant criticism and hostile interruptions, which did not always confine themselves to words. In the first three Gospels we are in face of Country simplicity; in St. John's Gospel we are confronted with the rough sharpness and rudeness of the Town. But under both conditions there is the still calmness which no opposition can ruffle. We can see the Lord passing through the midst of the infuriated mob whom His demeanour has overawed. As the terrible charge of blasphemy is raised, we are struck with wonder at the presence of mind which turns the edge of the accusation by one of those rabbinical questions to which the Jew would always listen. Amid the falling noise of the murderous stones, we can hear the clear voice in its quiet tones declaring that many good works had He wrought among them, and demanding for which of them they stoned Him. The farewell discourses, followed by the High-priestly prayer, stand alone in the sublimity of their Divine glory, but they do not differ essentially from the other words of Christ. They are but extended echoes of that word which drew to His presence the

sorrowing and unhappy, or of that other word which sent the repentant woman from the Pharisee's dining-room forgiven and at peace.

I have left to the last to notice the exceeding beauty and pathos of Christ's teaching. Miracles, parables, exhortations, conversations, are all filled to the full with the wonderful loveliness of the Master's character. Whether He is attending the sorrowing father to the bedside of his dying child; whether He is defending the stricken woman at His feet from the hardness of the cruel Pharisee; whether He is inviting the weary and heavy-laden to find their rest in Him; whether He is comforting the weeping Mary by calling her by her name;—every word spoken is marked by a kindness and tenderness which no mere human lips have ever reached. But this tenderness, and beauty, and pathos of words, is more than mere style or manner of expression. It is no grace of diction. It is the outcome of the Saviour's heart; it is the outward form in which the everflowing love of Christ reveals itself to man.

IV.

THE TEMPTED CHRIST.

The life of the Lord Jesus Christ was a life of temptation. Of His temptations several have been recorded by the Evangelists. Before the commencement of His ministry, Christ was tempted in the Wilderness of Judea; later the influence of His mother and the taunts of His brethren were used to tempt Him to withdraw from His appointed work; almost at the very moment that His heart was gladdened by St. Peter's noble confession, Satan used that apostle as a tempter; for Christ, who more than any other lost His life that He might save it, there was the temptation to save His life by the refusal to bear the cross; the Pharisees were Satan's tools as in hypocritical kindness they advised the Lord to leave Galilee for fear of Herod; heathen Greeks were made to subserve the purpose of the Evil One by presenting in vivid light the awful death which awaited Him by the uplifting of the cross;

the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane is not called a temptation, but what temptation was more dreadful than that last conflict with the powers of darkness. Common usage, I cannot but think, has fallen into a serious error in speaking of *the* temptation in the wilderness. Men speak, if they do not think, as if this temptation stood alone in the life of Christ. Nothing can be a greater mistake. Our Lord's whole life was one continued temptation. We have but to read the memoirs, which the Holy Ghost has caused to be written for our learning, in order to recognise in almost every page how the Lord Jesus Christ was exposed to ceaseless temptations. He was subjected to trials of temper, trials of character, trials of principle; He was harassed by temptations caused by nervous irritability, or want of strength, or physical weakness, or bodily weariness; unfair opposition was constantly urging Him to give way to undue anger and unrestrained passion; or rejection and desertion would, had it been possible, have betrayed Him into moodiness or cynical despair. The machinations of His foes, the fickleness of the mob, even the foolishness of His disciples were scarcely ever wanting to try His spirit, and would often goad Him beyond endurance. All the continually recurring trials,

which are ever betraying man into faults he has bitterly to deplore, and into sins of which he has to repent in sorrow, were present in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ.

From these temptations certain facts and inferences bearing on our Lord's nature and mental disposition may be adduced.

The temptations of Christ were real temptations. To say such a thing is almost like repeating a truism; but if it be a truism, it is one we are not apt to realise, or to grasp in all its significance. We are familiar with the suffering Christ, but I question if we are as familiar with the tempted Christ. The very honour we bear our Master prevents us from regarding Him as actually struggling with sin. We are so afraid of falling into humanitarian errors which detract from the perfection of the Divine nature, that we are prone to subtract somewhat from the perfectness of His human nature. Forgetting that the first heresy which invaded the Church was the denial of the humanity of Christ by docetic errors, we almost think in our heart of hearts that the temptations of Christ were apparent and not real. All such views of the Saviour are false and misleading. Pain, struggle, and conflict attended Christ's temptations, as they form part of the

temptations to which ordinary men are exposed. There was a real contest and a real battle, as well as a real victory. How it was we know not; perhaps it is not necessary that we should know; at the same time we have the distinct authority of an inspired writer for the fact. "Our Lord," writes the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "hath been in all points tempted like as we are." "It formed," as Neander well says, "part of the trial and self-denial of Christ through His whole life, that, together with the consciousness that He was the Son of God, He joined the weakness and dependence of humanity." Almost every form of temptation to which man is liable may be resolved into the exalting of the human will above the will of God. Man commits sin because he cannot submit himself to God's will. This may be traced in the temptations of our Lord. The object of Satan was to induce Christ to set up His own human will above the purpose of His Father. And the Lord's sufferings furnished the material which gave substance to the temptation. In the wilderness Christ was suffering hunger, and the natural hunger was made the groundwork of the insidious suggestion, "If thou be the Son of God, command these stones to be made bread." So in the other recorded temptations. The sufferings of

Christ were used as a means to shake His submission. The "hour he had to pass through," and "the cup he had to drink," were presented to His mind with terrible vividness, that so our Lord might be induced to use the "save Me from this hour," and the "let this cup pass from Me," in murmuring insubmission disjointed from the "Father, glorify Thy name," and "Thy will, not Mine, be done."

But the Lord remained sinless. There was not in Him any choice between good and evil. The temptation, however real, was wholly external. Satan found in Christ the natural human weakness, which may exist without selfishness, and which made the temptation possible; but he could not find in the pure and holy soul of Jesus any actual selfishness on which to seize, by the power of which the external temptation might have become an internal seduction. Although all the power and malignity of hell assailed His soul, His soul remained pure. He was tempted in all points like as we are, but being tempted, He was "yet without sin."

It was as man that Christ met and conquered Satan. The tempter came with apparent acknowledgment of the Godhead which dwelt within his adversary: "If thou be the Son of God." But

Christ passes by the lofty title, and answers the temptation as the representative of the human race: "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone." It has been surmised that Satan was ignorant whether the Messiah was indeed the Son of God, and that he used the expression for the purpose of discovering the true character of his adversary. Another supposition is that the title was itself part of the temptation; either an insidious flattery, suggesting to Christ that as the Son of God He possessed the power, and could at His choice use it for the relief of His pressing necessity; or that the expression was a taunt, implying a doubt both of His Divine nature, and of His ability to effect, as a proof of it, the transformation of the stone into bread. But with Satan's motives we have to do only so far as they reacted upon our Lord. The point upon which attention should be fixed is that Christ, designedly and purposely, met Satan and defeated him as man — as the Representative and Head of all mankind.

Christ's temptations—especially the temptation in the wilderness—were part of the training of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord, in taking upon Himself man's nature, conformed Himself in all points to the necessities and requirements of

humanity. When God raises up a man for the purpose of carrying out large designs and important work, He first trains and disciplines the mind for the future which lies before it. Before Saul became the great Apostle of the Gentiles, He had to spend three years in quiet and retirement in Arabia. Before Luther could proclaim the Reformation, he had to have his own spirit humbled and trained in the Augustinian convent. And to this necessity for training, our Lord, though He were the Son of God, submitted Himself in obedience to His Father. As there was a Patmos for St. John, and an Arabia for St. Paul, so was there a wilderness for Christ. Even He, the Highest, must learn the submission He was to teach to others, and must carry the yoke which His followers would have to bear. He must wrestle with Satan before He could overthrow Satan's kingdom; He must, in His own person, conquer the adversary before He could commence His mission; He must crush the serpent's head before He could proclaim the kingdom of heaven to be at hand.

Nor was this preliminary preparation, a preparation in appearance only. However difficult it is for us to understand the mystery, it is undoubtedly Scripture truth that our Lord, in taking man's

nature upon Him, took upon Him man's needs and wants, sin only excepted. The various incidents which mark the life of the Son of Man, are recorded not only for our example, but as so many stages through which it was necessary for Him to pass before He could perform the work which He came to earth to accomplish. The union of the two natures did not detract from the perfectness of His humanity—a perfectness in the necessities and weaknesses, as well as in the higher qualities. Just as our Lord needed food to satisfy His physical hunger, just as He needed sleep to restore His bodily powers, just as He needed prayer to strengthen His mental endurance, so did He most truly need solitude, and retirement, and conflict, to nerve Him for His approaching ministry. We need never be afraid of acknowledging the reality of our Lord's perfect humanity; by losing sight of it, we lose half the beauty of His Divine life, and much more than half the blessing to be derived from His example and sympathy.

A parallel to the forty days' fast of Christ is afforded by the fast of Moses in Mount Sinai, and of Elijah on Mount Horeb. But there is another event recorded in sacred history which presents a far deeper parallelism than is to be found in the

case either of Moses or Elijah. I allude to the temptation of our first parents in paradise. There is not here the same external numerical resemblance of the forty days; but the temptation in its inner import is the same in both cases, though the result was so different. In paradise it was Satan's design to frustrate the purpose of God; in the wilderness he had the same object in view. In paradise it was the head of mankind who was the object of his attack; in the wilderness it is also the new Head of humanity whom he opposed. In paradise the issue of the struggle affected, not the single person of Adam, but all his descendants through him; in the wilderness again Christ fought and conquered not for Himself, but for all mankind. Even the objective temptation is in both instances similar. In paradise the serpent points out to Eve that the fruit of the tree is good for food; in the wilderness the tempter says to Christ, "Command these stones to be made bread."

Even the very scene by which our Lord was surrounded spoke in no indistinct terms of that first conflict. Everywhere was there evidence of the curse. The beautiful Garden of Eden has given place to the wilderness; the tame animals subject to man, though preying upon each other,

have become changed, as St. Mark graphically reminds us, into wild beasts. Yet how different was the result of this solitary struggle in the wilderness from that of the trial in paradise! By the first Adam all was lost; by the second Adam all is regained. By the first Adam a curse was entailed upon all his posterity; by the second Adam that curse becomes changed into blessing. This victory over Satan in the wilderness is the first-fruits of the coming triumph; an earnest that the reign of Evil is wearing to its close; a pledge that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Already by anticipation we seem to hear the triumphant exclamation of St. Paul: "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive."

The time of the temptation is chosen with admirable skill. Christ has fasted forty days and forty nights, and was an hungred. We know how long-continued fasting acts on the human frame, and, through the nervous system, how it affects the spiritual being. During those forty days we may well believe that, notwithstanding the temptations, the Son of God had been in close communion with His Father. There is a very strange law of human nature, which it would be difficult to believe true, if unhappy experience

had not again and again verified it. Spiritual exaltation, like all other exaltation, is followed by reaction. Intense spiritual movement is nearly always succeeded by spiritual depression; and it is in these times of spiritual depression that Satan is very apt to exert his power; and in too many cases he not only tempts men, but succeeds in making them yield to his temptation. There was, then, from Satan's point of view, singular fitness that he should approach the Christ at the moment when the Son of Man would have His nervous energy exhausted by want of food, and, if we may say so, His spiritual force depressed by the natural reaction succeeding to spiritual exaltation.

The significations attached to the temptations in the wilderness are very numerous. And this is what might naturally be supposed would be the case, for as the Lord's Prayer is the type of every utterance of man to God, so are these temptations of Christ the types of every conflict which man has to wage with evil. They have been shown to point to pleasure, by which the young are seduced; to desire of applause and glory, which influence middle life; to love of power, which characterises older men. Others have traced in them self-will, longing for in-

dependence of all ordinances, whether parental, governmental, or Divine; carelessness and want of forethought, both as regards things temporal and spiritual; worldly-mindedness, which feigns to do God's work by means which are evil. They are indeed of infinite value as examples of the temptations by which each individual man is tried, and as pointing to the method by which he may best conquer. But with the details of the temptations I am not concerned, or at least only so far as they acted upon the mind of Christ, and affected Him. It should indeed be noted how our Lord Himself, on declining to make the stones into the bread He so sorely needed in His hunger, learned the lesson against overthoughtfulness and anxiety which He taught afterwards in His Sermon on the Mount. Or how Christ, by refusing to cast Himself from the pinnacle of the Temple, resisted in His own person that presumptuous craving for outward manifestations of power which He was later on to combat in the Jews, when they ever and again came to Him with their demand for a sign from heaven. Or again, how in casting from Him the profane suggestion, that, by doing homage to Satan as a suzerain, He might attain the desired end, and establish without opposition the kingdom of

heaven in the world, He applied to His own heart the lesson of faith, and trust, and childlike submission upon God, which is the reverse of that spirit of worldliness He so strongly and persistently denounced.

Nor should the manner in which Christ resisted the temptation be overlooked. This again contains an important lesson which men may lay to heart; and, what is more to our present purpose, it affords another insight into the working of the mind of Christ. As Christ submitted Himself to temptation as the representative of humanity, so the mode of the personal resistance of Christ to Satan was the resistance of a man. He did not put forth His Divine power. He did not attempt to crush Satan by the force of the majesty which dwelt within Him. As the temptation came to Him as the Son of Man, so, as the Son of Man, did He repel it. His appeal was to the law and testimony. To Christ God's Word was the test of right, and the matter, so far as right and wrong were concerned, was at an end when the Scripture had been appealed to. Christ did not enter into casuistical questions. He might have argued that He would break no commandment, and would do nothing wrong in itself, if He made the stone bread. He might have reasoned, that, as He

possessed the power of working miracles, He might, for once, work a miracle for Himself and in His own interests, and gain attention to His Divine mission by descending unhurt from the pinnacle of the Temple. But He did not do so. He did not dally with the temptation. He sought by no plausible reasoning to make evil appear good. He simply quoted the Divine command. The Spirit of the Word of God was opposed to all self-seeking and presumption, and forbade with clear distinctness every form of selfishness, even though there were no positive command to interdict the particular action. In the third temptation Satan overstepped this seemingly neutral line, and offered as his seduction a thing unlawful in itself. Then Christ drives him from His presence. He drives him from His presence, but His weapon is still from the same armoury: "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

As the Synoptics have recorded the temptation in the wilderness at the commencement of our Lord's ministry, so St. John has preserved the account of the temptation which came to Christ at the close of His earthly career in the streets of Jerusalem. Time, place, scene, surroundings, are all different. It was the moment of the Lord's

triumph. He had just entered Jerusalem for the last time. On other occasions He had come to the city in quiet stillness, unrecognised and unobserved. This, His final advent, had been with pomp and majesty, as befitted Israel's theocratic king. Only a short time before, death and Hades had been forced to acknowledge the power of His Divine word; and the sepulchre had given up the dead after four days of burial. The crowd, moved by the report of the great miracle, had gone forth to meet Him, and had spread their garments before Him in the way, and had waved branches of palm trees in His honour, and the shout had gone up to heaven, "Blessed be the king that cometh in the name of the Lord."

But all had not been triumphant. Forebodings of coming evil had not been wanting. Mary, the sister of the man who had been raised to life, had taken ointment worth three hundred pence to anoint the head and the feet of their honoured guest. As she performs her work of thankfulness and love, the words, which she had more than once heard from her Master's lips of some terrible doom awaiting Him, come over her heart with new meaning, and give an undefined feeling of consecration to her act. And the Lord Himself, in answering the cavils some were disposed to make

at the apparent waste, brings out the half unconscious significance of the anointing into mournful clearness, "Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me; for ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good, but me ye have not always; she hath done what she could; she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying."

Nor was this the only incident which seemed to tell that the triumph was premature, and that not yet was David's greater Son about to restore the kingdom of Israel to its pristine glory. Even at the very moment that the air is ringing with the hosannas of the thronging multitudes, a passionate sadness comes over the soul of Christ. A bend of the slope of the mount of Olives reveals to His sight Jerusalem. There was the Temple lately restored by Herod, resplendent in gorgeous magnificence. There was the Palace of the Asmonean princes rising proudly aloft. There was the Palace of the High Priest, and of John Hyrcanus. And above them and the Temple towered frowningly the Roman Castle of Antonia. Gay and busy crowds were moving along its streets, and the city was decked out in holiday costume, for within a few days the great national festival of deliverance was to be celebrated. But to the

inward vision of the Lord Jesus a far different scene presents itself. Another and a fiercer multitude has taken the place of those shouting their hosannas. Another and a fiercer throng than those unarmed worshippers parade the streets. Another and more terrible cry than that of festive guests rises to His ears. He sees the Roman soldiery, maddened with conquest and resistance, hewing down the defenceless citizens; He sees panic-stricken crowds flying in all directions; He sees the beautiful house, where the fathers worshipped, a prey to flames; He sees His countrymen, in their despair and horror, flinging themselves into the raging fire, or dashing themselves headlong into the deep valley at His feet. And, as He thus beholds its coming fall He weeps over the doomed city: "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!"

Amid this downfall of Jewish hopes and Jewish expectations, St. John presents us with a type of the ingathering of the Gentiles, as St. Matthew had introduced the Wise Men approaching at the birth of Christ. As the Eastern Magi came to the cradle of Christ, so Western Greeks come to the uplifting of His cross. Among the multitude there were certain Greeks which had come up to

worship at the feast. These heathen come to the Hellenist Philip, a native of the Greek-speaking Bethsaida of Galilee, with a request that they might see Jesus. Philip hesitates to introduce the strangers, and tells Andrew of their desire; and then Philip and Andrew tell Jesus. The Lord sees in this request the beginning of the fulfilment of the promise that He should rule over the Gentiles. "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified." But as He speaks a foreshadowing of the death which awaited Him, and through which He was to be glorified, comes over Him: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Albeit the sensitive human soul shrank from the shame and agony of death: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name."

Some would put a note of interrogation after the word "hour," and read the passage thus: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? shall I say, Father, save Me from this hour? But for the sake of passing through this hour, came I unto it. Let Me say rather, Father, glorify Thy name." Even Neander understands it

so. "In full consciousness He had looked forward to it from the beginning as essential to the 'fulfilment' of His work; therefore all His feelings and wishes are concentrated upon the one central aim of His whole life, that God may be glorified in mankind by His sufferings." But at the same time there was the struggle and temptation. In the man Christ Jesus there was the willing spirit, but there was also the weak flesh—weak as far as it could be so without sin—and shrinking with natural dread from all painful suffering. It was this weakness of the flesh which Satan uses as a means of temptation. The words, then, which Christ uttered must be taken as a veritable prayer. The "Save Me from this hour" was as real a prayer as the "Let this cup pass from Me" was a real prayer in Gethsemane. At the same time it was only the flesh that was weak; it was only the sensitive soul that was troubled. The spirit remained unflinchingly serene; its only utterance was "Father, glorify Thy name." Rudolph Stier, in his words of Jesus, puts it admirably: "To our feeling it is inharmonious to make a prayer, which springs from the deepest impulse, begin with a question, Should I so pray? so speak? Further, the Lord does not speak in any doubt or uncertainty—What shall I

choose? but merely, What shall I say? The two opposites pressed hard upon Him in an infinitely deeper and more actual sense than upon His apostles afterwards—the cry for help, the submission to the Father's counsel. Human language is not sufficient for the combined utterance of both, as both were perfectly combined in Him—hence the What shall I say? Therefore He utters them one after the other, the one being as earnest and as solemnly intended as the other. First the human dismay—Help Me! Then immediately the cry which coincides with the perfect submission of Gethsemane—"Glorify Thy name."

Our Lord was perfect man, and as man shrank from suffering. Hence the possibility of the temptation. The shrinking from suffering was not sin; an excess of shrinking, passing over into insubmission to the Father's will, would have been sin. "The life of God in Him did not exclude the uprising of human feelings in view of the death and conflict with evil which lay before Him." "Not by unhumanising Himself, but by subordinating the human to the Divine, was He to realise the ideal of pure human virtue; He was to be a perfect example for us even in the struggles of human weakness." Every cry of the Psalms—Save me! Help me! Deliver me! which

men use in their sorest need, find their truest expression in this word of Christ; every agony and conflict of David but a type of the agony and conflict of the Son of David.

The one expression is co-ordinate with the other, and herein lies the victory over the temptation. Within its inner depths the spirit remains untroubled. Even in view of His coming crucifixion, and, what to His holy soul was far worse, the becoming sin for us, His perfect and complete dependence upon the Father's will remains unbroken. Satan could play upon the weakness of the flesh, but Satan could not find in Him, as he can in us, any swerving of the spirit. Beyond the agony, beyond the shame of the cross, the Son of God looks calmly to the Divine will, and despite all fleshly fears, and in spite of all dreadful forebodings, in conscious strength He drives the tempter from Him: "Father, glorify Thy name."

It must not be thought that our Lord was not saved. He was most truly saved; and the phrase, "For this cause," points out the manner in which His salvation was accomplished. And this manner is doubly worth observing, because it is the mode through which, in all ages, God has seen it best to save His servants. "For this cause came I unto this hour," to be saved from it by being

saved in it. Such was the manner in which the Father saved His Son, and answered His prayer. The very passing through the hour was being saved from it. By receiving grace to bear, Christ was saved, and the Father's name was glorified. Our Lord's sufferings did not only result in salvation and glorification; the sufferings were themselves part of the glorification and salvation. This is no fanciful interpretation. It is the strict meaning of the phrase. And the interpretation is borne out by the comment of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews in a passage on the prayers of Christ. "Who in the days of His flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death," He was "heard for His godly fear."

The day of judgment alone will disclose the comfort and strength which God's tried children in all ages have derived from this human utterance of Christ. Aged Christians, as Polycarp, on the eve of ascending to heaven in the fiery chariot of the martyr; delicate women, as Felicitas, expecting to be torn limb from limb by the wild beasts amid the gaze of unpitying thousands; lonely monks, as John Wezel, dying day by day under the slow pangs of hunger in the pitiless

prison of the convent; some parched and suffocating under the *piombi* of the cruel Venice; some perishing by cold in the damp cells by the frozen Rhine; some seeking a retreat among the stern Alps from the sterner bigotry of their fellow-men; some lying with dislocated and broken limbs in the secret dungeons of the Inquisition; — oh, among such men, and in such times, how must these two words of Christ have striven for the mastery! at one time, as the sense of their wretchedness and hopelessness weighed upon them, ready to exclaim, almost in despair, "Father, save me from this hour;" at other times, when God made His strength perfect in their weakness, able to cry triumphantly, "Father, glorify Thy name."

And shall they not be a source of comfort and strength to us in our lesser trials and temptations? Shall not the sufferings which Jesus bore be powerful to nerve our weak flesh to suffer patiently for His sake? Cannot we learn the lesson which our Master's example sets before us, not petulantly, nor despairingly, to use His words; but ever with the "Father, save me," to combine the "Father, glorify Thy name?" If thus in waiting dependence, and in God-glorifying submission, we enter into the temptations with which Satan shall try our fortitude and faith, as the Lord

was saved from His hour of suffering by being saved in it, so shall we be delivered from every evil which we fear by being safely brought through it. Not only shall our patience and obedience bring glory to God, but the trial bravely passed shall bring a blessing to ourselves. For in meditating upon the temptations of Christ we must not fail to notice the grace which followed their successful resistance. When in the wilderness, Satan, baffled, left the Son of Man, the angels of His Father came to minister unto Him; when in the streets of Jerusalem, Christ, in the spirit of filial submission, foiled the endeavour of the Evil One by His "Father, glorify Thy name," there came a voice from heaven saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

V.

CHRIST WORKING MIRACLES.

I HAVE no intention of adding another to the thousand and one essays which have been written to prove the possibility of the miracles of Christ, or their truth. To all who believe that a personal God, possessed of and exercising a personal will, is beyond and over Nature, the argument which the late Dean Mansel formulated is conclusive. A stone, which was lying on the beach, is found on the top of the cliff. The movement is beyond the power of Nature, and contrary to the law of gravitation. Personal will effected it. A man carried the stone to the top of the cliff. Not contrary to the working of natural law, but by adapting those very laws to his own purpose, man, by the exercise of will, overcame the force of gravity and raised the stone. If we only knew enough, might not all miracles be capable of as simple an explanation? The scientists of the present day seem to have closed their senses to

one half of man's being. They lose themselves in the study of phenonema—"the things which do appear." In their essential existence these outward forms of matter, of which they make so much, are as hidden as the unseen God whom they declare to be unknowable. Those other facts—which are no less facts than the material things of which they almost exclusively take cognisance—relating to the spiritual world, in which man has his higher and nobler life, they ignore altogether.

To those, then, who believe in a personal God guiding and directing the universe, the miracles need present no insuperable difficulty. They are, at least, possible. Our present purpose, however, is not so much to consider the miracles of Christ, as Christ working miracles. The object of our study is not the miracles as miracles, but the miracles as incidents and events in the life of Christ. We would inquire how they affected Him; the light they throw upon the workings of His mind; the revelation they afford as to His character; the lesson they teach as to His feelings and ideas.

As to the miracles themselves, they fall naturally into four groups. There are the miracles affecting external Nature; there are the miracles acting

upon man's physical life; there are the miracles touching man's spiritual existence; and there are the miracles exercised over that unknown power which we call death. In nearly all cases it is possible to trace out an analogy between the miracles and the ordinary operations of Nature. The analogy is no explanation of the miracle, nor does it point to its cause, but it gives the mind some glimmer of an idea how the miracle might be, and yet the natural laws of the universe remain unbroken.

The Nature miracles are those affecting material substances, and the elements. In turning the water into wine the Lord Jesus acted on matter. He performed an act similar to the process which Nature herself carries on when she causes the vine to sprout, its blossoms to appear, and its fruit to ripen. In the two miracles of feeding the multitudes there is an appearance of actual increase of material substance; I say an *appearance*, because an actual creative increase of matter not previously existing is so opposed to the law of the fixed quantitative value of matter as to be unthinkable. There is no natural process known to us analogous to this increase of food, and these two miracles present, perhaps, greater difficulties than any other recorded. The stilling of the

storm is also a Nature miracle. It is analogous to what we witness any time in the sudden cessation of the wind. But a lake will heave and swell for many hours after the lulling of the wind, and the instantaneous calmness of the water lies beyond any known natural explanation.

The miracles affecting man's physical nature are the miracles of healing. They have their analogy in the healing art of the physician. Indeed to the ignorant the effect of many drugs might easily appear miraculous. Last century Dr. Chieselden caused a boy who had been born blind to see. The process was very simple, but it was the first time it had ever been performed. It would not in those days have been very difficult to have persuaded the greater part of mankind that a miracle had been wrought. There was no question that the boy was blind, and had been born blind; there was equally no question that he had regained his sight. Had Dr. Chieselden kept his method, then tried for the first time, a secret, very many would have believed that the recovery of the boy's sight was a miracle.

The miracles affecting man's spiritual life are those called in popular language demoniacal possession. I say in popular language, because the expression demoniacal possession does not

occur in the New Testament. Here again there are analogies which occur in ordinary life. The physician in a lunatic asylum exercises a power over his patients which is almost marvellous. The most unruly will often be quieted by the one single look of his conscious authority. More than one writer has spoken of the healing power of a natural kind which seemed to be inherent in the Lord Jesus Christ. His quiet calmness especially exercised a soothing influence over those afflicted with nervous disorders. And it may well be believed that our Lord, embodying in Himself the perfection of human nature, possessed in the highest degree all those qualities which are found in the best type of men. Apart from any miraculous interference, there is abundant evidence in the Gospels, that, on more than one trying occasion, the quiet determination of Christ, and His calmness in the midst of angry mobs, exercised a restraining influence over the wild passion of violent people. The raging inhabitants of Nazareth gave way while He passed through their midst; the excited crowd in the streets of Jerusalem dared not carry out their deadly purpose; the armed band sent to apprehend Him fell back abashed before His presence as He fronted them in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Of death we know nothing. It is on the authoritative declaration of Holy Scripture that we believe that death is but the portal of life. Apart from revelation all is a blank silence. No one has ever returned to solve the mystery of life and death. Sleep offers a kind of analogy; but in sleep all the involuntary processes of life proceed with the same regularity as in the waking hours. The heart beats, the blood circulates, the lungs perform their offices, the process of digestion and assimilation continues. Consciousness alone is absent. Modern science has taught us that the body is always dying; and that life is the recuperative power which resupplies that which incipient death is destroying. In old age the death of the body is gradual; one part is dead while another still lives. In a state of trance or coma sometimes all the outward signs of death are apparent, while a state of consciousness is retained; and it is on record that persons in this condition have been actually buried alive. When our Lord raised the dead there is no need to suppose that any law of Nature—that is to say, any law by which God rules the universe—was violated. It is only our ignorance which makes us think so. The knowledge of civilised man transcends the imagination of the savage; is it unreasonable to

believe that the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and His consequent power to act through natural law, transcended the mental horizon of the scientist? To raise the dead, or restore departed animation, is contrary to experience, argue the philosophers; may not the Christian retort that the manifestation of the Son of God forms an unique episode in history?

The miracles of Christ were not miracles, in the sense of wonders, to Himself. There is no consciousness in Him that anything unusual was taking place. This marks a point of difference between Christ and all others who have claimed to work miracles. The prophet of the old dispensation was quite conscious that in raising a dead child to life, or in feeding starving people with insufficient means, he was doing something out of the way of ordinary routine. The apostles of New Testament times were also conscious of putting forth a power which did not inherently belong to them. They were but acting as the agents of a higher authority. But there is no trace of such a thought in the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Middle Ages men were possessed with an overpowering thought of the constant presence of God. They were always looking for supernatural intervention; or, to speak more precisely, they did

not accurately distinguish between God's ordinary and extraordinary mode of acting. Now this thought which pervaded the Middle Ages was an actual fact in the life of Christ. "My Father worketh hitherto;" and in the mind of the Lord Jesus there was absolutely no line of distinction between the constant working of God through laws known and recognised, and that unusual working which we, in our ignorance, call miraculous. Christ sees His disciples in their boat on the Lake of Galilee. He desires to join them. So He walks across the water, and thus gains the ship. He meets a funeral procession, and is touched with pity at the forlorn state of the mother left childless and a widow. So with a word He restores to her her son from the dead, just as a skilful physician might through his knowledge have arrested death at an earlier stage by the administration of a healing drug. The Son of God does the work which lies before Him; and in the simplicity of power He uses the means which lie nearest at His disposal.

In accordance with this view we find that the miracle was worked, because what we call a miracle was the best and fittest means to accomplish the end which our Lord had in view. And here again a difference is to be noted between the

miracles of Christ and those recorded in the Old Testament. It has been stated that God never allows a miracle to be worked beyond its absolute necessity. It is said that all that can be left to man's effort is relegated to man, and that the Divine power is put forth to accomplish only that which lies beyond the scope of man. This contention is in the main true, at least it is true so far as the Old Testament is concerned. But it is not true as regards the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ again and again performed miracles for objects which could have been attained with almost equal ease by natural methods. Our Lord did not hesitate to make use of the miraculous power which dwelt within Him because it was miraculous. The tribute money was demanded. The poverty of our Lord was not so great but that He could have obtained the half shekel. Nor was it, as some have imagined, by way of protest that Christ did not furnish the money in the ordinary way. But Christ bids St. Peter to catch a fish in whose mouth he would find the sum needed to satisfy the demand.

Again, there is no premeditation about our Lord's miracles. The Old Testament seer went forth in conscious strength to do the mighty work wherewith God had charged him. But in Christ

the consciousness of power is so complete that it becomes almost unconscious. In Him it is like one of those actions which a man performs as a matter of course when the call for action moves his will. The occasion of His first miracle would have seemed altogether unworthy to a Jewish rabbi, or a heathen philosopher. It was simply to add to the pleasure of guests assembled at a feast, or at most to save His host from some passing humiliation. And not only was the miracle the result of an accident (as we speak), but it was performed so quietly, that those who drank of the heaven-given wine hardly knew that a wonder had taken place. The turning of the water into wine is narrated by St. John alone. The first miracle recorded by St. Matthew is marked by the same simplicity. Descending from the Mount of Beatitudes Christ meets a wretched leper, and, moved by compassion, in answer to the man's imploring cry, heals him with a touch. And this character of unpremeditativeness marks all the miracles of Christ. A chance meeting, or a movement of pity, or the need of those with whom He happened to be at the moment, furnished their occasion. The only one that seems to form an exception is the raising of Lazarus. In this case the death had been

foreseen, and the determination to recall him to life had been taken. But even here the miracle was due to the natural causes which preceded it, and to these causes the determination must be referred. The illness of Lazarus, the absence of Christ from Bethany, the deep sorrow of the sisters, these were the moving impulses which resulted in the stupendous display of power.

The miracles of Christ were never performed for display, nor for effect, nor even, primarily, for a sign. The narrative of the life of Christ is so familiar that we often fail to perceive the significance of the record. Any one, reading this wonderful life for the first time, would be struck with astonishment at the entire absence of all straining after effect in the miracles which Christ performed. Wherever Christ may chance to be, there the miracle takes place. At the foot of a hill, by the side of the lake, on the storm-tossed sea, in some desolate region, in some country road, on the highway, at the entrance to a town, in the seclusion of a house, at the service of the synagogue-worship, in the streets of Jerusalem, during the dark stillness of the night, in the coolness of the twilight, in the sight of the mid-day sun, in the early hours of the morning. Place or time make no difference. If people are con-

gregated around, then they behold it. If no one is present, then the wonder is wrought in solitude. It was denied to idle curiosity. Herod did not behold what the Galilean peasants and Jewish populace often witnessed. It was not granted to sceptical unbelief. When Pharisees, devoid of faith, came to Christ praying that a sign might be given them, our Lord refused.

The miracles were indeed signs; but they were signs for those who believed. At the marriage in Cana of Galilee Christ manifested forth His glory, and His disciples believed on Him. Their minds had been prepared to receive and to understand. The faith had been awakened in them, and so in the act of Christ they could recognise the finger of God. It is not recorded that those who did not believe were convinced by any mighty work which they beheld. Miracles did not produce faith in sceptics, or doubters, or those hostile to Christ. The opening of the eyes of the blind man did not persuade the Jewish rulers of the Messianic character of Christ's mission. When "the Jews" had witnessed what we call the greatest of all our Lord's signs, they went straight from the grave of Lazarus to denounce Him to the Pharisees. The words of Christ, His teaching, the actions of His life, the compassion which caused the wonders,

not the wonders themselves, were the things which carried conviction. A word which Christ uttered in a parable had a terrible meaning for those who, crying out for a sign, rejected His Divine teaching: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if one rise from the dead."

Our Lord was always careful to induce communion between Himself and those whom He healed by His miraculous power. Faith in His power was the first essential condition. "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" was the question put to the two blind men to whom Christ gave sight. "All things are possible to him that believeth," was the answer to the father of the epileptic child. Again we are told that at Nazareth He could not do many mighty works on account of the lack of faith. But in addition to the faith required, Christ established a personal connection between Himself and the sick person. On the evening of the day in which He healed so many ailing, and cast out with His word the spirits of many who were possessed, St. Luke is careful to tell us that each cure was effected separately, and that each diseased person was brought into personal relationship with his Healer. "He laid His hands upon every one of them."

We read continually that the attention of the patient was arrested by some word spoken, as in the case of the crippled man who had lain so many years in hopeless suffering by the Pool of Bethesda; or we are reminded that He placed His hands on the sightless eyes of the blind, and that no fear of ceremonial defilement hindered Him from touching the loathsome sores of the lepers.

Nor were our Lord's miracles performed without trouble or effort on His part. In the act of healing, a certain healing power seems to have passed from Christ to the person whom He cured. A woman was suffering from an issue of blood; she had faith in Christ's power, she believed that the mere touch of His clothes would suffice to cure her. Not unnaturally she shrank from confessing the nature of her malady. A crowd was around the Saviour pressing Him on all sides. Timidly she drew near, and with trembling hand touched the border of His garment. Her faith received its reward, and she was healed. It was not by any superhuman knowledge that Christ became aware of what had happened. It was from the physical sensation of which He was conscious. Strength had left Him, and He was conscious of its loss. He "perceived that power

had gone forth from Him." Accordingly St. Matthew tells us that in healing the sick the Saviour took Himself their infirmities. We find a certain analogy to this in mesmerism. Mesmerism is one of those obscure influences of which very little is known. So much, however, may be conceded, that a certain power of will is exercised by the mesmeriser over his subject; and by the effort required the physical strength is affected, and bodily weakness is induced. Again, the physiologists tell us that in sympathy the burden of the pain or sorrow does actually, according to its proportion, pass from the sufferer to the person who gives the sympathy. And who is there of ourselves who, when in the presence of the sorrow of those dear to us, has not felt the exhaustive strain on our physical being which has accompanied the endeavour to calm or to console. So our blessed Lord, in His Divine compassion, did Himself suffer, when He put forth His sympathy to assuage the mourner's tears, or exerted His power to bring life-giving health to the sick.

The miracles of Christ formed part of that warfare which was ever waging between the Son of God and the power of evil which He was manifested to destroy. The rage of the elements, the roaring wind, and the surging waves ever

seeking to engulph the fisher's boat; the fell sickness racking with pain man's body; the paralysis of the mental powers dethroning man's intellect, and leaving him a prey to unreasoning violence, or to unclean desires; the death which shrouded him in the unknown darkness of the tomb;—these things were to the Saviour's vision but objective forms of the curse of sin which it was His mission to remove. The kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan were brought together in opposition. The battle between the Lord's Christ and the great adversary was ever going on. Man's infirmities, and his sicknesses, in the eyes of Christ, were the outward symbols of the sin which was their cause. So the inspired writer, in the healing of the sick, and in the casting out of devils, sees direct blows given, which, in the end, shall cause Satan's empire to totter to its fall. Every leper cleansed, every blind man restored to sight, every helpless paralytic made to walk, every distracted man brought back to the sweetness and light of reason, above all the dead recalled to life—each, in the salvation accorded them, furnished a proof that a greater than Satan was here, and that the kingdom of God was being manifested upon earth.

The value of the miracles in the present day

consists mainly in the insight they afford to the mind and the heart of the Saviour. In the first place they were absolutely unselfish. To Christ a miracle was no more than is an ordinary act to ourselves. Christ seems to have drawn no distinction between the natural and the (to us) supernatural. Yet Christ never performed a miracle for His own personal benefit. He did not supply Himself miraculously with food. He did not provide miraculously for any of His wants. He did not in this manner ward off the pain, and suffering, and injury, to which He was constantly exposed. On one or two occasions He did put forth power for purposes of His own. He provided in this way for the tribute money; He walked by such means across the sea to His disciples. But there is no instance in which by a miracle He obtained gain to Himself. The miracles of Christ were absolutely unselfish in their character.

With two exceptions they were never destructive; nor were they ever punitive, or vindictive. The destruction of the swine in the lake at Gadara, and the blasting of the unfruitful fig-tree near to Bethany, have been alluded to in a former essay. Here it may suffice to say that both these acts, while to some extent in apparent contradic-

tion to the tenour of the Saviour's life, are not contradictory to the ordinary working of Nature's laws, which laws, it must be remembered, are in reality the laws of God. The Old Testament miracles were frequently punitive. The leprosy of Gehazi furnishes an example. In more than one instance they approach at least very near to being vindictive. Perhaps it was this reason which led the compilers of the new Lectionary to omit the tearing in pieces of the "little children," or "young lads," by the two she-bears. Similarly the destruction of the unoffending soldiers of Ahaziah by Elijah is not appointed to be read in Divine service. Perhaps nothing shows more clearly, what a noble idea of the beauty and loveliness of Christ has formed itself in the Christian consciousness, than the fact that it is not possible to conceive that our dear Lord could ever have performed a miracle out of vindictiveness. We understand fully how sorely He was tried. We grasp fully how impossible it would have been for us to have borne in silence without retaliation the cruel sneers and bitter sarcasms of His infuriated enemies. We have at times felt our hearts beat more quickly, as, listening to the cries beneath the cross, we have almost longed to see the suffering and crucified Christ vindicate

His majesty in the ruin and annihilation of the taunting scoffers. But such a thought was foreign to the mind of Christ. Disciples, jealous for their Master's honour, might desire to call down fire from heaven to burn up those who refused to receive Him; but the heart of the Son of Man is laid bare in the word of rebuke, which, whether authentic or not, has the ring of a genuine expression of Christ: "The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Nor were any of Christ's miracles of a punitive character. Punitive miracles, if we understand punitive in its highest sense as corrective, would stand on a quite different footing to vindicate miracles. They would not shock our moral sense. Even the Son of God Himself was not without chastisement, but "learned obedience by the things which He suffered." For the moment, during Christ's actual presence, the corrective element was allowed to rest in abeyance. Judgment—decision of character—was deferred. The children of the bride-chamber could not fast while the bridegroom was with them. The one object of Christ was to draw men to Himself by the loveliness of His own disposition, and by His revelation of the Fatherhood of God. Hence the punitive element is not found in the miracles of Christ.

In a positive sense the miracles are the revelation of the love of the Lord Jesus Christ to suffering humanity. They are the objective expression of the gracious words which proceed out of His mouth. They teach in action how the Redeemer was ever yearning to save those whose nature He had adopted. They are the outward form of the longing for reconciliation which existed in the heart of the Father, and was made manifest in the Son. They are the formal evidence of the love which God bare towards the world which He sent His Son to save. They are the symbols of His sympathy with all human suffering. The miracles are the answers to expressed, or unexpressed, appeals to His compassion. It was His Divine pity that caused them to be performed. It was in His God-like compassion that they all originated. It was *suffering* humanity which came to Christ. Once and again, as in the case of Mary of Bethany, men's joys were brought to Christ. But for the most part it was the sorrows and griefs of man which were laid as offerings at His feet. This is the key to the right understanding of the miracles. He took the sorrow and the pain from which He gave relief. It was not out of superfluous abundance that He gave without thought and without care, as we too often dispense our charities. But

the Evangelist tells us that He made the ills His own. It is noteworthy that if we had only the Gospel of St. Mark we might imagine that on a certain evening the cures wrought, which were many and of which no details are given, were effected by one single word, without effort or fatigue, on the part of Christ. But, as has already been pointed out, it was not so. St. Luke specifies the individual and personal nature of the healing, and St. Matthew gives the words which have been quoted. This is the type of all our Lord's miracles of healing: "Himself bare our sicknesses."

We must not forget to notice that the miracles of Christ were at the disposal of all, who, needing them, appealed to Him for help. The appeal was never made in vain. No man ever brought his grief into Christ's presence, and left that presence unrelieved. The leper, the blind, the lame, the deaf, the paralysed, the fever-stricken, the lunatic, the epileptic, the demoniac, were all cleansed, or healed, or made to walk, or blessed with sight, or given back their reason. Not one was refused, not one was forbidden, not one was sent away. There is no single instance of rejection. Surely a fact well worth remembering, worth placing in the heart's inmost shrine with infinite gratitude and

satisfaction. If it had been otherwise! If only one had looked for help in vain, might not each one, in his moments of despondency, be inclined to think that he was the exception? He helped nearly all, but one was passed by: may not I be that one now?

There is no instance of rejection; but there is one instance of delay. That one instance is most instructive of all. Lazarus—the friend whom Christ loved—lay dying. And his sisters, whom Christ also loved, one of whom He loved better than others, sent a messenger to tell Him. Christ, apparently unheedful, remained for two days where He was, while the sisters sat weeping over the body of their brother; for Lazarus had died. Is there anything recorded in Holy Scripture more significant, or which carries with it a deeper lesson to all sad, loving hearts, than that Mary of Bethany sent to call Christ to her in her sorrow, and that Christ waited and delayed before He answered to her call? And yet I think I would rather have waited, notwithstanding all the pain, with Mary of Bethany, in order in the end to receive her full blessing, than have had the help granted at once, as it was to so many of the sick whom Christ healed, and who never saw Him more.

The supreme lesson of the miracles, then, is this: That the Lord Jesus Christ is gracious, and merciful, and compassionate. They are not wonders, the possibility of which philosophers may reject with scorn; they are not marvels, concerning the truth of which scientists may doubt; they are not supernatural facts, concerning the causes of which theologians may wrangle; in the deepest sense they are not even mere signs of the power which Christ inherently possessed as the Son of God; but they are evidences which the most ignorant can understand, that the Lord Jesus Christ has sympathy with man; they are the proof which the most unlettered can apprehend, that the great High Priest, who liveth ever in the heavens to plead His people's cause, is One who can be touched with the feeling of man's infirmities.

VI.

THE PHYSICAL WEARINESS OF CHRIST.

Weariness is either physical or mental. Both are very human. "The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary." Men grow faint and weary, and have need of kindly sleep to recuperate their exhausted strength. An American author, who has written a book upon the Waterloo Campaign, tells us, that, at the time of his last struggle for empire, Napoleon was suffering from illness, and that his physical exhaustion was so great, that he actually fell into repeated dozes while the battle, on which everything depended, was being fought; and Mr. Gardner traces to this cause the Emperor's defeat and Wellington's victory. The story of the Duc d'Enghien affords another example of a man being utterly overcome with weariness at a great crisis. So when the Lord Jesus Christ is represented as tired and weary, the picture offered for our contemplation is an

especially human one. All external signs of His Divinity are laid aside: He sleeps, as a tired child might sleep; and to all outward appearance He is but that Jesus of Nazareth of whom His countrymen said scoffingly, "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses, and of Juda and Simon?"

A striking scene, one chief feature of which is Christ succumbing to physical weariness, has been preserved in the Evangel. All the three synoptical Evangelists have told the story, how, on one occasion, as the Lord was passing across the Lake of Galilee, He fell asleep. A miracle followed upon His awakening, but I do not think that the fact of Christ sleeping is introduced only on account of the miracle. I do not think it is told mainly on account of the miracle. In their narrative the Evangelists are never over-impressed with the wonder of the miracle. They narrate how the multitude were astonished at the mighty deed which was wrought before them, when some paralysed man was restored to the use of his limbs; they tell how the people marvelled, when some deaf man was made to speak, or some blind man left Christ seeing. They even speak more than once of the feeling of awe which came over the disciples themselves at the manifestation of

this Divine power in their Master. But no one can read their narrative without being struck with the extreme simplicity with which the details of the miracles are told. To the Lord Himself, a miracle had no greater significance than any other act which He did. The Divine power answered to His call as in ordinary men the physical effort answers to the requirement of the will. He never braced Himself for the performance of any mighty work. He is not like the Old Testament saints, who recalled indeed the dead to life, but did so with strong effort and mighty endeavour. Nearly every miracle of Christ arose out of the circumstance of His life, and its occasion was, as we speak, accidental. The wine fails at a feast, and He, supplying the want, turns the water into wine. He is teaching in a synagogue; a woman bowed down by infirmity happens to be present, and Christ heals her with a word. He meets a funeral procession, and, touched by pity for the widowed mother, restores to her her son alive. And the Evangelists have caught this quiet spirit, and narrate with simple calmness what the Lord did without mental disturbance. Therefore it would seem that one detail of a miracle may be quite as important as another, and that the occasion which

led to the miracle may contain as much instruction as the miracle itself; nay, even it may well be, that sometimes the circumstances which preceded it, and the surroundings which gave it colour, may be as much worthy of consideration as the power displayed in the sign. In this particular miracle of the stilling of the waters, the physical fact of Christ sleeping—which, it may be remarked in passing, is the only instance recorded of Christ's sleeping—contains as deep a lesson as the fears of the disciples, or their cry for help, or the rebuke to wind and wave.

St. Matthew and St. Luke introduce the story without any reference to what preceded. St. Matthew says simply, "And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him." St. Luke is equally vague: "Now it came to pass on a certain day that He went into a ship with His disciples." Neither give us any clue to His weariness, nor explain its cause. But the explanation is given by the Evangelist, who often, by some graphic touch, throws new light upon the incidents recorded. St. Mark specifies the day on which the circumstance occurred, and its hour; he also shows that there was ample cause, why, on this occasion, the Lord should be overcome with physical weariness, and how it came to pass,

that, soothed by the quiet movement of the rippling lake, as they sailed He fell asleep.

For this was the day on which our Lord began to teach in parables. It must have been a sad day for Him. The people had rejected Him; they had refused to hear; and now the power of hearing, or at least of hearing with understanding, was to be taken from them. Christ taught in parables, not, as so many seem to think, in order to make the truth easy by clothing it in a garb of beauty, but that those who hardened themselves, seeing might not perceive, and hearing might not understand. It is easy, then, to conceive that the Lord Jesus, following a well-understood law of mental action, had on this day put forth His whole strength in His attempt to teach the people. He had made four distinct efforts. In the early morning He had spoken to the people generally the Parable of the Sower. During the noontide heat He had retired within doors for the *siesta* in which all Southern people indulge. But His mind was too eager to allow Him to rest. Besides, the disciples had been much impressed by the new style of teaching. They had not understood; and they gathered round Him with many questions. They would know why He taught in parables, and they asked to have the

particular parable explained to them. And Christ, ever forgetful of self when others needed Him, explained the reason why He had adopted the parable, and proceeded to make the meaning of the one He had uttered clear to them. Then He had gone forth again, and again the multitude had gathered about Him, and again He had taught them. Still by parables. At this time three are spoken—the Parable of the Tares of the Field, of the Grain of Mustard Seed, of the Leaven. Once more He returns to the house, but not to rest. The disciples, including probably many besides the apostles, once more crowd around Him, and He explains at least one parable, and adds several more, giving the key to their right understanding as He proceeds. It is no wonder, therefore, that our Lord, at the close of such a day, should be wearied out. Neither Christ nor His friends were wealthy. The Eastern homes of the lower classes were, as they still are to-day, mere mud hovels. We can well understand that after the heat and glare and weariness of the day, the cool water would appear tempting in its refreshing stillness and quiet. There He would find the rest He needed. "The same day, when the even was come, He saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side."

Tired nature then asserted herself. The Lord of heaven and earth, who upholdeth and sustaineth all things by the word of His power, being found in fashion as a man, had to yield to the requirements of the nature He had adopted, and, as the boat pursued its tranquil course across the smooth water, the Saviour of the world slept.

In the meantime a change came over the scene. The Lake of Gennesareth, about sixteen miles in length, and seven miles in breadth, is not unlike the Lake of Geneva. It covers the bottom of a profound valley, and is environed on every side by lofty and precipitous hills, except at the narrow entrance and outlet of the Jordan at each extremity. Like all mountain lakes, it is liable to sudden tempests, the wind rushing down with exceeding violence, and raising, almost in an instant, a boisterous and most dangerous sea. So it happened on the present occasion. A storm arose all on a sudden, and so violent was the squall, that the disciples, accustomed as they were to the wild moods of the Sea of Galilee, were paralysed with terror. The Lord, wearied out by the fatigue He had undergone, slept calmly on. The disciples awake Him with their despairing cry, "Save us, Lord, or we perish!" Undisturbed by the tumult roaring around Him, Christ rises

from His slumber. He rebukes the wind, and bids the sea be still; and wind and wave hear, and, recognising the voice of their Master, obey. "There was a great calm."

Doubts have been thrown upon the reality of the miracle by that school which holds that the miracles were natural events which the desires, or fears, or superstitions, or the ignorance of the people or of the disciples, magnified into superhuman wonders. The wind, it is argued, falls upon these mountain lakes as suddenly as it rises. It was only a curious coincidence that the lull happened just at the moment when Christ awoke. The disciples, blinded by their fear, did not perceive this, as they would have done had their minds been less perturbed. And thus, without any idea of falsehood or fraud, the coincidence assumed the nature of a miracle. On being first awakened, Christ had uttered some indistinct words, which, in the confusion of the moment, were thought to take the form of a positive command to the wind and water; and it got to be the firm belief—a belief which incorporated itself first in the traditional story of Christ's life, and eventually into the Gospel narrative — that a miracle, altogether out of Nature, and that may be called almost monstrous, had been performed.

But while all schools of sceptics agree in denying the fact of miracles, they have a curious tendency to quarrel with each other, and to deny the force of the explanations by which each attempt to deprive the sign of its Divine validity. Thus an opposing school of sceptics has shown that this *rational* solution of the miracle is impossible. It is true that sometimes in these mountainous regions the wind will subside as suddenly as it rises, but the subsidence of the wind does not produce immediate subsidence of the waters. They will heave and swell for hours after the exciting cause has ceased. And the followers of Jesus were too accustomed to their lake to be deceived on such a point as this. They would not have been very much struck by the fall of the wind; they were, if the story be true, very much struck by the sudden calming of the angry sea. "The men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and sea obey Him?" The objections of the mythical school rest on more general grounds. Those who adopt this theory do not seek to explain any particular miracle, but denying the historical story of the Gospel, attempt to reduce the whole life of Christ to a conception of the religious consciousness. Christians may be content to let the two schools of unbelief mutually

destroy each other. They will in faith believe that He who has power over wind and sea, did actually perform the miracle, and they will see the proof of its reality in that which of old carried conviction to the fishermen who knew their mountain lake so well. Not only did the wind cease, but the sea was calm.

How thoroughly human were the antecedents of the miracle. The natural laws which govern the life of man had produced their natural effects. Long-continued mental effort had been succeeded by nervous exhaustion. Continuous talking had produced physical lassitude. A general weariness was the result. Christ was tired, as any mortal man would have been tired who had answered to the same call upon his strength and energy. And, as any other man, Christ needed rest. The close, stifling air of a small, ill-ventilated house did not allure Him. But there, at His feet, came the soft ripple of the lake breaking upon the shore. It was the evening hour—still, serene, peaceful. The water was tranquil, cool-looking, and inviting to one weary. There, on its smooth bosom, He would have quiet from all disturbance. The multitude, which all day long had crowded round Him, could not follow there with their distracting questioning and noise. He proposed

to sail across the lake to the other side. At once, as he was, without any special preparation, they set forth. Then the Lord yielded to the feeling of weariness which oppressed Him, and settling Himself down in the hinder part of the ship, His head resting upon some rough pillow, He fell asleep.

How full of Divine power was the miracle itself! I think the calmness which our Lord showed was human; that it belonged to His human nature; that it was part of that disposition to which self-repression had trained His character. But regard this as we may, what a scene was it on which Christ opened His eyes! He is awoke suddenly by the cries of frightened men. Before He can collect Himself, their voices are ringing in His ears praying for protection from death: "Lord, save us, we perish." The soft evening on which He had closed His eyes is vanished. Around Him is murky darkness, illumined, possibly, by the sultry glare of the lightning; the winds, roaring and bellowing, are rushing all around Him. By the dim light can be seen the water, lashed into angry waves, whose white crests were breaking in fierce foam over the boat, threatening to engulf it. In the midst of the din and tumult Christ rises and stands. Wind and waves

were alike His servants, the creatures of His hand. They were His ministers to do His pleasure, and to subserve His will. To them, in tones of authority, He speaks. He rebuked, as one bound to obey His behest, the wind; He bids, with the authority which belonged to the Son of God, peace to the waves.

The story is not told by St. John. But as is so often the case, the author of the Fourth Gospel presents to our view the same phase of our Lord's nature by an incident similar in its essential character, though differing altogether in every external circumstance. Just as St. John omits from his Gospel the scene of the temptation in the wilderness, and yet does not fail to show how the Christ was exposed to the assaults of Satan; so, although he is silent concerning the sleep of Christ previous to the miracle of the stilling of the waters, he is not forgetful to pourtray the one perfect Christ in His two natures. He too has to tell of the physical weariness of Christ. And while in the picture which the fourth Evangelist has drawn, the Lord Jesus, in His weariness, is altogether man, through the veil of the humanity the Divine nature is apparent. It is not shown, as in the storm, by an external sign of power; no outward manifestation of glory is given; no

miracle is performed. The effect is outside Himself. The power lies in a word, spoken almost in pain, by a worn, weary traveller, suffering from thirst. Faith was produced by the inward power of the Divinity, because the inward want of the listener was satisfied. Immediately before St. John had recorded the conversation at night with Nicodemus. As the Evangelist wrote not merely according to his own will, but as he was moved by the Holy Spirit, one can but see a significance in the grouping together these two testimonies to the Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ;—one shown in the word spoken concerning Himself, the fruit of which was to be seen afterwards at the very time when it might have been supposed that all faith would have died out; the other proved by the conviction carried home to the heart of a sinful woman, which again there is every reason to believe was precious seed resulting after the Lord's death in an abundant harvest.

Christ was returning from Judæa to Galilee, and He "must needs go through Samaria." There was no physical need. It was quite open to the Jew to cross the Jordan, and to travel through Peræa. Indeed it would appear that this circuitous route was at least as frequently

adopted. Not only did the Jew hate the Samaritan, and as far as possible avoid all contact with him; but a small body of Jews passing through Samaria, was very likely to meet with insult, if not with worse treatment. Nor does there appear any special external circumstance pressing upon our Lord. At this early stage of Christ's ministry there could have been no political reasons for His avoiding Peræa. It will be remembered that it was to Peræa that He retired towards the close of His life in order to avoid the enmity of the Jews. Nor was there any cause for extraordinary haste, as is proved by the fact that He stayed two days in Sychar. The "must needs" of St. John has a moral significance. It was an inward call according to the counsel of God in order that a soul might be saved, and seed, that should hereafter bear fruit, should be planted. There *may* be ground for saying that the expression "excludes anything like a *designed* visitation of Samaria," and for questioning whether the inward call signified any "internal conscious impulse of Christ's will." Although our Lord declared that He "was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and even gave on one occasion a charge to the disciples not "to enter into any city of the Samaritans," He never treated the

Samaritans as heathen, nor did He exclude them from the benefits of His ministry. Anyway it is impossible not to see in the expression of St. John an intimation of the Divine providence which the whole narrative fully bears out.

Christ had to pass through Samaria. On the way weariness overtook Him. Possibly faintness from want of food might also have been present. He had thrown Himself down exhausted by the side of the well which was outside the town, while the disciples, hardier and more inured to fatigue than their Master, went to buy food. The time was the sixth hour. There is a difficulty about the way St. John is supposed to count time. According to the ordinary calculation the sixth hour would be reckoned from six o'clock in the morning, and it would be noon. It has been pointed out that the mid-day heat would be a very unlikely time at which to travel, and also that nobody would come at such an untoward hour, according to Eastern ideas, to draw water from the well. One attempt has been made to turn this sixth hour into early morning on the supposition that the band had travelled by night, and another to make it to be six o'clock in the evening, counting the hours from mid-day. Townson has written an ingenious book on the

computation of time by St. John, in which the Evangelist is made to follow a reckoning which obtained in Asia Minor, where the writer lived when he wrote his Gospel; but German scholars maintain that this mode of reckoning time never existed in Asia Minor, and that it is in fact nothing more than a clever invention of the author. Further, a careful writer like St. John would not, had his time been so calculated, have failed to denote whether it was morning or evening. It being noon accounts for the presence of *one* woman; had it been the evening hour, groups of women and of girls would have been trooping to the well to provide for the wants of the ensuing day; although it must be stated that there was another well on the east side of the little town, and nearer to Sychar than Jacob's well. The noonday hour accounts also for the weariness which is a special feature in the narrative. If the Lord had been walking for any distance, and the last part of the journey had been accomplished in the heat of the sun, it is easy to understand how weariness should have overtaken Him.

As the Lord sat thus by the well, a woman came to draw. "Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink." There is no reason to look for any ulterior motive in the request. There is no need

to suppose that our Lord made the request in order to lead to the conversation which followed. Christ was weary, hot, and tired. He must have been longing for the cool, refreshing water. But the well was deep, and He had no means of obtaining it. What more natural than as the woman prepared to draw, Christ should say to her: "Give me to drink?"

But it must be noticed that the Lord did not get the draught of water for which He craved. The first feeling of the woman was sheer surprise; though not an ill-natured surprise. Every word in her answer is emphatic. "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria?" She had no intention of refusing the request; but one surprise led on to another until the request was altogether forgotten. It is an error to say, as one expositor does, that Christ asked for the water after she had drawn it up from the well. She was preparing to draw, and was arrested in the act by the strangeness, as it seemed to her, of the request. One can see the whole scene as if it were a picture. Christ is seated, either on the brink of the well, or close beside it. The woman has rested her waterpot beside her, and forgets all about it, even though her hand rested on it, as the interest of the con-

versation becomes more and more intense. The arrival of the disciples is not sufficient to turn her thoughts; and full of Christ's words, which seem to her to have laid bare all the history of her previous life, she runs back to the city, leaving her empty waterpot behind her. Apart from every other consideration, it is one of the most graphic scenes in the New Testament.

The conversation itself is not the point with which we are occupied, so it must be passed over in comparative silence. It forms a striking example of our Lord's method of teaching. There is first of all the abrupt word designed to arrest the attention. Then there is the leading up from the material water to that which it spiritually represents—the Holy Spirit. Next with unequal tact the conversation is turned upon the woman's own life; the apparently unconnected word, "Go call thy husband," being in reality a granting of the woman's prayer, "Sir, give me this water that I thirst not." How naturally, too, almost unconsciously, does the woman attempt to turn the conversation, which was becoming sufficiently personal to make her conscience uneasy, by introducing a disputed point of theology. And it is noteworthy that our Lord speaks concerning Himself and His mission with a clearness and distinct-

ness which we do not find in His discourses to His own countrymen. In no ambiguous terms He declares the cessation of the Jewish ritual, and foreshadows a new worship which should embrace all true worshippers of the Father; finally He declares Himself to be the promised Messiah.

The matter which more immediately concerns us is the weariness of Christ. He was tired from His hot journey; He was athirst; He was faint for food. But hunger, weariness, and thirst are all alike forgotten. A work had been given Him to do, and to that work all else must be made subservient. He puts aside weariness to enter into the long conversation; He foregoes the draught of water, because to draw attention to His material want would have broken in upon the current of the woman's thoughts; and when the disciples, who had obtained the food, bring it to Him with the entreaty, "Master, eat," in the exaltation of His spirit He puts the food aside: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work."

These two incidents bring vividly before our minds the reality of our Lord's humanity. He shared with man all the wants, needs, and requirements of human nature. Fatigue produced weariness: weariness found surcease in kindly

sleep. He longed for rest, as other men have longed for it. The material food was necessary to stay His hunger; the cold, refreshing water from the well allayed His thirst. We may go further. It was not only the want and needs and requirements of human nature He shared with man; He took upon Him all the weaknesses of the nature He had adopted, at least so far as those weaknesses were inherent in it, and were not of the nature of sin. It is this aspect of the Saviour which endears Him to us. We have fellow-feeling with One the all-tenor of whose life proved Him to be like us. Who like us needed food to sustain His body; who like us when athirst longed for water; who like us knew the meaning of the words fatigue and lassitude; and who, after the exertion of teaching irresponsive men, or after the long tramp in the noonday sun, succumbed to physical weariness.

VII.

THE MENTAL DEPRESSION OF CHRIST.

Mental depression is more human in its character, perhaps, than physical weariness. For while weariness is a feeling of the body, depression is an emotion of the mind. Christ, clothed in a human body, could not but experience the exhaustion which necessarily attends action; but it is not so easy to understand how Christ—the Divine Son—should have yielded to the mental nervelessness, which, in us at least, is the result either of unfaith in God, or of ignorance of God's purposes. In a sphere which is ordered by Divine wisdom and governed by Divine power, there is no room for disappointment, because perfect wisdom must ordain all things for the best, and all-embracing power must provide for their due accomplishment. Human nature feels disappointment and depression, because it sees only one or two links in the chain of Divine government, and cannot understand even what it sees. Man feels

depression because his hopes—which were based on folly—prove abortive. So we are once again face to face with the problem which ever recurs when we fix our attention on the life of the Son of Man—the reconciliation of Divine wisdom and Divine insight, with the infirmities inherent in the nature He had adopted. How could Christ, possessing perfect faith in the Father's governance, feel discouragement? We can only answer by another question—How could the beloved Son increase in favour with God? It is a mystery we shall never understand. But it is a mystery by grasping which alone we can apprehend the human nature of Christ. These things must needs be so, and they were. We can tell why they were so. How they were so we cannot tell.

Mental depression is a human emotion. It belongs inherently to the nature with which man is endowed. Some temperaments are more liable to its influence than others. But none are altogether free from its black shadow. There are times when the most sanguine succumb as completely to this feeling of utter hopelessness as the man of bilious or lymphatic temperament. Therefore the Lord Jesus Christ had to suffer from this feeling of depression, as He had to make the experience of every other feeling common to the nature He

had assumed. He was tempted (tried) in *all* points like as man is; not only in order that every individual of the human race might find in the Saviour the special form of sympathy he needs, but that He Himself might learn.

It is St. John who has given a vivid description of an instance of mental depression, which, for the moment, almost overwhelmed the Lord Jesus. A long train of circumstances had tended to produce it. Physical circumstances had combined with moral influences to excite it. There had been predisposing excitement; there had been the strong emotion caused by the electric influence of large masses of people; there had been the powerful restraint which He had been obliged to exert over His Apostles; there had been the intensity of prayer; there had been consequent exhaustion and weariness. Then there came rejection. All these predisposing causes resulted in a terrible access of discouragement and depression such as the Evangelist describes.

The occasion of the Lord finding Himself on the eastern side of the lake in a desert place belonging to Bethsaida Julias was a very sad one. St. John introduces his narrative with the indefinite "After these things"—an expression which this Evangelist more than once uses, and

which is intended to denote a certain interval of time, and not an immediate succession of events; it never gives a fixed date. But what is lacking in St. John is supplied by St. Matthew and St. Luke. John the Baptist had been beheaded in the fortress of Macherus by Herod's orders. His death was a great blow to Christ. John was the cousin of our Lord; he had been His precursor; it was at his hands that He had received baptism; many of His Apostles had, in the first instance, been disciples of the son of Zachariah. The death of John would further present to the mental eye of Christ His own coming doom with a vividness which could but deeply impress His imagination. There seems to have been some idea that Herod might follow up his deed of violence by an attempt to get Christ into his power. This was one, if not the principal, motive which led the Lord Jesus to betake Himself into the wilder regions of the lake district, just as, at a later period of His ministry, the hostility of the Jews caused Him to withdraw into Peræa. St. Luke narrates the story of his retirement in connection with the return of the twelve from their mission. The harmony is not quite clear. The sending forth of the Apostles took place probably just about the time of the murder

of the Baptist. There would be a cross rumour. The account of what the Apostles had done—the devils they had cast out, the cures they had effected—reached Herod magnified by exaggerated report; and Herod, perceiving, as others did, that these wonders were wrought in effect by the power of their Master, had his conscience roused, and, trembling, feared that the new prophet must be John risen from the dead. Almost at the same time the talk of the country would inform the disciples of John's death, and of Herod's surmisings thereupon. The news is so full of importance that they hasten their return in order to bring their Master the tidings; and Christ, partly to allay their excitement, partly to afford them rest, and also in order to avoid giving an unnecessary occasion for Herod's violence, retires to the solitary wastes at the head of the Lake of Galilee.

Two events conspired to deprive Christ of the privacy He sought. The cures wrought by the Apostles had spread His renown far and wide. Crowds, some impelled by curiosity, some seeking healing, some, as St. Mark hints, really desirous of profiting from the teaching of so wonderful a Rabbi, gather round Him. St. John implies that He had accidentally fallen in with one of the

large pilgrim caravans, which was on its way to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover festival. Thus a very large multitude, numbering more than five thousand persons, had been collected together. Moved with compassion towards them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd, Christ, as was His wont, began to teach them many things. The day was beginning to wear away, but the great Master, forgetting, as was His wont, physical fatigue while engaged about His Father's business, continued His discourse. His disciples came to Him. They represented that it was a desert place; that the day was far spent; that the people had nothing to eat; and suggested that they should be sent away without delay to the neighbouring villages in order that they might buy themselves food. The Lord determined otherwise. He bids them: "Give ye them to eat." But the disciples themselves, intending probably to return to Capernaum at night, appear to have been without provisions. There chanced to be a lad with five loaves and two fishes: these are purchased. One, it was Philip, asks half in surprise, half in irony, "Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?" Although they had had so many proofs of our Lord's power, it never seems to have

entered the disciples' minds that He might exert that power to feed this multitude. Christ commanded that the people should sit down on the grass. He blesseth and breaketh the bread, and lo! as He breaks, it multiplies under His hand, so that the whole multitude eat and are filled.

The miracle made a deep impression upon the minds of those who witnessed it, and profited by it. To feed the hungry, this was indeed an office worthy of the Messiah in the eyes of those whose daily bread was not too well assured. They hail Him as their theocratic King. The excitement began to tell upon the disciples. Their reward, they begin to think, is at hand. The kingdom they had looked forward to was about to be established, and hopes are rife that, as they had followed their Lord in His humiliation, they should share with Him the glory of His throne. Already distinctions and places of honour are rising before their mental vision. Christ, perceiving the dangerous tendency of their thoughts, constrained them, as St. Matthew and St. Mark carefully observe, to embark in their boat and pass over to Capernaum. Having thus got rid of one disturbing element, He proceeds to send the multitude away.

But the prevailing excitement had not been

without its influence on the mind of Christ Himself. He was man, and no man could be subjected to the movement of such a mass of men without feeling its subtle effect. To tranquillise His disturbed spirit, the Lord Jesus, now left in solitude, ascends the hill in order to hold communion with God. "He went up into a mountain apart to pray." In the meantime a change had come over the face of Nature. The weather, which up to that time had been calm, became stormy. The boat, by this time in the middle of the lake, was tossed with waves. From the high ground He occupied He saw them, perhaps by the flash of the lightning, perhaps by the light of the moon, which may ever and again have shone through the clouds which were flying across the sky. It was about three o'clock in the morning, but through the contrary winds they had not succeeded in making more than twenty-five or thirty stadia, and were still far from their destination. Coming across the water He approaches them. At first they are terrified, thinking that they see a spirit. Christ's voice reassures them: "It is I, be not afraid." The episode of Peter attempting to walk on the waves to meet Him should be noticed, for the impulse which his faith received from Christ's act and word of rebuke,

may in a measure account for the unswerving confidence of the next day, and may have added force to his declaration that of the twelve none would forsake Him. Having received Him into the boat, they quickly reached their destination. There is no need to suppose a third miracle. The wind ceased, falling as rapidly as it had risen; the sea would continue to heave and swell, for there was no miraculous interference on this occasion, as there was when Christ some time before had stilled the waters, and all became calm; and the strong arms of these hardy fishermen, reassured by the presence of the Master, and animated with new courage, would "quickly" row the boat over the few miles which lay between them and Capernaum.

As the sign given to St. Peter was specially worthy of notice as a cause of his determination to adhere to Christ though all others should leave Him, so should the sign of Christ's power over the ordinary forces of Nature be noted in connection with the after depression of Christ's spirit, because this manifestation of the Lord's glory reacted upon the disciples at large. Their faith was strengthened, so that when defection came their love remained firm and constant. For the disciples themselves, as many a word in the

Gospels proves, were but men; and ambition and a desire for great things was very present with them. They followed Christ without wavering; but up to the very last they looked forward to the establishment of a temporal throne, and were longing for an earthly kingdom in which they should play exalted parts as ministers, and viziers, and chief officers of state. To them, no less than to the thronging multitude in the synagogue and streets of Capernaum, it was a moment of disillusion.

The morrow dawned. Many of the multitude had, like Christ and His disciples, betaken themselves to Capernaum. The excitement was not allayed. Flying rumours of the greatness of the miracle, of the power which this wonderful Teacher possessed of feeding hungry men, pervaded all the town. There was a general state of expectancy; what was to happen next? The first question put is one of curiosity. They had observed that the disciples had left in their boat, and had surmised that there were no other boats at the place, although in this, as St. John carefully points out, they were mistaken. They themselves had skirted the shore of the lake, and so had arrived at Capernaum; but they had seen no trace of Christ by the way, and therefore they

doubted whether He had reached Capernaum in that way. Consequently, they put their question: Rabbi, when camest Thou hither? This question the Lord does not answer. The miraculous crossing of the lake was intended to assure the disciples and strengthen *their* faith; it was not designed as a sign to these people, whose unspirituality of mind would have resisted the evidence of *any* sign, as they did in fact remain indifferent to the sign which had been given them on the preceding day. Miracles may awaken faith; they may strengthen faith; they do not bring conviction to the faithless.

It is difficult to decide how much of the discourse which followed took place in the open air, and how much in the synagogue. It is not of any importance. The discourse itself is of the highest import. But it is not with the discourse that we are immediately concerned. Our object is rather to notice the impression it made upon the hearers, and the effect which their consequent conduct produced upon the mind of Christ.

The people had sought Christ. But the question in the heart of the Saviour was, Why did they seek Him? And when they come to Him with their idle interrogatory, as to the manner in which He crossed the lake, it is to this unasked

question that He answers. I see here the first note of the sadness which lay in the heart of Jesus, and which was to find a deeper expression afterwards. The words come as in music an unexpected minor chord, which henceforth shall give a pervading tone to the whole symphony. Why did they seek Him? He had been moved with compassion towards them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd. The day before His persuasive accents seem to have penetrated to their souls. When they had grown hungry and faint, He had put forth His Divine power and had fed them. And now again they were clustering round Him, seeking Him, pressing Him with questions. It might have been a sight dear, and full of holy joy, to the heart of Him whose sole object and endeavour was to save men and to win them for His Father's kingdom. Why did they seek Him? If they had but sought Him in sincerity, because they believed and were sure that He had the words of eternal life! Then indeed might St. John have recorded, as St. Matthew had done already, that Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and that a great gladness had come to illumine that life which was a life of sorrow. But it might not be. In their seeking there was no element of faith, there was no germ of love.

Their seeking was but self-seeking. A sensual curiosity, a lust of marvel, a carnal desire to behold more signs of wonder, which to them should be no signs at all, and the sole result of which should be a sensation of gaping astonishment. Therefore they sought Him! A mere low craving for the satisfaction of their animal appetite, whether of a new sensation, or of hunger to be appeased in idle sloth without honest effort. As He gazed over the rude, surging crowd, open-mouthed with idiotic expectation, how depression must have seized upon the heart of Jesus—a depression which the events of that day should deepen, till in any other but Him it would have been absolute despair.

At first the crowd is good-humoured, respectful, almost deferential. The memory of the miracle is still with them. But as the words of Christ fall upon their ears, these sentiments become changed. To be fed when hungry is one thing, to be rebuked for unspirituality of mind is quite another. They begin to formulate captious questions, not for the sake of learning from their Teacher, but in that cavilling mood which was never far from the Jewish mind. "What must we do that we may work the works of God?" Then they hark back to the old demand for a

sign. On this string the Jew was for ever harping. He wanted a sign from heaven. They appeal to the sign which Moses gave—the manna in the wilderness. They had already forgotten the bread which they ate but yesterday, or the cures the report of which had brought them together at that very time. The spiritual tone which Christ adopts irritates them still further. Angry murmurs are heard; the opposition increased; there is contention, interruption, hot words of anger; and the very people who yesterday would have crowned Him as their King, to-day with swift fickleness hasten to dethrone their idol.

It was our Lord's first rejection by the people. Its bitterness was exceedingly great. If we attempt to put ourselves into our Lord's place, and think what our feelings would be under similar circumstances, we shall realise, in a degree, how keen was the disappointment and depression. For He was as we are. The Divinity which dwelt within Him did not in any way detract from the reality of His human feelings, or from their intensity. As we feel He felt. Only in Him the sinlessness of His Being gave a sting to the disappointment of which we can know nothing. Ingratitude was not mainly a personal

failing towards Himself; it was a sin against the Father. Rejection was not want of appreciation of His goodness, but it was blinding the eyes against the heavenly light. Going back from following Him was not the defection from a wise Teacher, but it was a turning away from good and a return to evil. In the murmuring and opposition He would see the enmity of man to God; in the declension from the truth He would be aware of the work of Satan. The personal feeling of personal desertion, with all the humiliation and sadness it involved, was there — was there as strongly as it could be in the most sensitive of men; but over and above the personal feeling, there was the terrible thought that these crowds, whom in His compassion He longed to save, were deliberately, and of set purpose, putting salvation from them. In no less than three of His parables Christ describes the joy that there is in heaven over the repentant sinner; and the only time in which the Lord Jesus Christ is said to have rejoiced was when, after the return of His disciples from their mission, looking forward in His prophetic spirit He saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven. One strong element, therefore, in the Lord's mental depression was this knowledge, to His spirit so full of horror, that, in

opposing and rejecting Him, these inhabitants of Capernaum were rejecting their own salvation, and were cutting themselves adrift from good and from God.

The pain was not less because it happened at His own city, at Capernaum. When the Nazarenes had refused Him, and treated Him at first with obloquy, and afterwards when their anger was stirred with murderous hate, He had withdrawn Himself from Nazareth, and settled at Capernaum. It had become the home of His choice as far as Christ had a home. From Capernaum many of His disciples were drawn. The brothers, Simon Peter and Andrew, originally of Bethsaida, seem afterwards to have settled at Capernaum, and probably James and John also lived there. It was here, on the shore of the lake, that they heard that quiet call to follow the Lord Jesus, which was to change them from simple fishermen into fishers of men. Here, too, it was that the future evangelist, St. Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom, hearing the voice of Jesus, left all to become His Apostle. Capernaum, again, had been the scene of many of Christ's miracles. Here was spoken the word of power which healed the servant of the centurion whose faith Christ commended; here resided the nobleman whose

son was healed by Christ by a word spoken at Cana; here, probably, lived Jairus the ruler whose little daughter Christ restored to life; here occurred the healing of Peter's wife's mother, and the cure of those many sick folk who gathered in the cool of the evening round the door of Peter's house. The paralysed man, whose bodily strength the Saviour restored by giving him the forgiveness of his sins, was an inhabitant of Capernaum; it was in the synagogue of Capernaum that the unclean spirit was cast out of the man, who, in his double personality, acknowledged the Lord to be the Holy One of God. But it is noteworthy, that after this rejection by the people of Capernaum, so far as we can gather from Scripture, no miracle was again performed within its walls. He did not quit Capernaum, as he had quitted Nazareth; but the grace which had been so abundantly bestowed upon it was withdrawn, and its inhabitants were left to that darkness of unbelief which they had chosen in preference to the light. There was pronounced upon Capernaum a curse, destined in aftertimes to be fulfilled so completely, that not even ecclesiastical tradition has ventured to fix its site, and the endeavour to discover the position which this once famous "city"—the Liverpool of the Jewish nation—occupied, is per-

haps the most hopeless problem in sacred topography. "Thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained unto this day."

Many causes, then, united together to make this rejection peculiarly full of pain, and to render the consequent mental depression severe. The depression was terrible. How keenly our Lord felt it may be easily gathered from the narrative of St. John. He was vexed, troubled, saddened, disappointed. For the moment His hopes were shattered; His spirit was bowed down utterly; or as utterly as it could be in Him whose will was ever at one with the will of the Father. He recognised it as a precursor of every rejection which should follow, and which should culminate in His final rejection and crucifixion. I think even that there is a trace of permanent change in the spirit of Christ's teaching. The buoyancy of His temperament seems to have been crushed out by it. The hopefulness of tone, which may be felt in His earlier discourses, seems to have fallen from Him. He is graver, sadder, at times even sterner. There had been partial rejection before; but it then had been the Scribes,

and the Rabbis, and the Pharisees—persons whom Christ did not hold in high esteem—who had refused Him. Now it was the people themselves. Those from whom He had sprung; whom He had ever befriended; whose cause He had ever pleaded; whose good He had ever sought; whom He had taught, healed, fed. The blow was very bitter. Can we wonder that He was deeply wounded and sore troubled?

In His human distress the Lord Jesus Christ turns, on this occasion, as He should again more than once, to the band of faithful companions whom He had chosen as His friends. At the moment of desertion He would seek comfort in their attachment and devotion. The form in which He puts the question marks the intensity of feeling—"Will ye also go away?" It is an exegesis as false as shallow which would read in this question an actual interrogation, implying a deliberate choice. It is not conformable with our Lord's meaning to suppose that He put something before His disciples concerning which they were to choose. Our Lord does not intend to say: the people who have heard me are offended; do you, my Apostles, consider well the spiritual meaning of my words, and the spiritual requirements of my service; and then, after due deliberation, decide

whether you too will follow their example and leave me. The words are a wail of agony to those who can understand. The people have forsaken Me; I am sore distressed; are there none faithful to Me? none whom I can trust? cannot I count on you? or would ye also go away? To any one who can understand the mind of Christ, the words in their bitterness of disappointment are more than plain. The warm-hearted, impulsive Peter at least understood them. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Peter, as is evident from the words of the Evangelist, "Jesus answered them," was but the spokesman giving expression to the sentiment they all, with one exception perhaps, entertained. And the words must have fallen like balm on the sore heart of Christ. But His depression was terrible. For the moment even these brave words fail to give Him comfort. The thought of His coming doom, which since the news of the Baptist's death had been very present with Him, rises before His imagination. A scene glides across His mental vision in which one of those very twelve is the chief actor. His answer must have sounded strange and harsh.

In what in other men would have been irritation, but in Him was only sorrowful sadness, Christ gives utterance to the words: "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?"

This is no isolated instance of mental depression in our Lord's life. There are several others recorded; there must have been many more which the evangelists have passed over in silence. But this one is narrated with a circumstantiality which is wanting in other cases. We can trace each separate detail step by step, from its first suggestion through the death of John to its climax in the synagogue of Capernaum. It presents a most vivid picture of what the Lord Jesus Christ was content to suffer for man's sake. And I hardly think it ends here. St. John was a very old man when he wrote his Gospel. But the disciple whom Jesus loved had not forgotten the impression which this incident, with its last prophetic words, had stamped upon his remembrance. May not this scene at Capernaum—Christ's own city—have been present to the mind of the Apostle, when, in his magnificent prologue, he breaks off to declare, "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not;" and

may not the noble words of Peter's answer also have been ringing in the ears of his memory, causing him to add immediately "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God"?

VIII.

THE HOME-LIFE OF CHRIST.

The very existence of man is dependent upon that home-life which has its root in the marriage state. Before the era of history, marriage existed. In the early ages of the race, the only record of which is to be found in some bone-cave or kitchen-midden, traces of marriage and of family-life are to be found. To be unmarried, among the Romans, was considered almost disgraceful. Among the Jews the highest importance was attached to marriage. But shortly before the time of Christ a spirit of asceticism, wholly foreign to Jewish ideas, had begun to show itself among them. The Essenes and Therapeutæ both avoided marriage. St. Paul alludes to this growing custom in the Epistle to the Colossians. The ascetic sects are not mentioned in the Gospels, but perhaps some trace of their influence may be discovered in John the Baptist. Undoubtedly, apart from the peculiar

office which he was designed to fill, there was a tendency to an isolated and self-contained life in the son of Elizabeth and Zechariah.

To any such tendency our Lord was directly opposed. Shorn of its malicious exaggeration, the insinuation of His enemies described truly the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. With slanderous lips they framed their accusation: "A gluttonous man, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." The words were a lie of the worst species, because a substratum of truth underlay it. Christ "was no hermit spirit, dwelling in mysterious solitariness apart from His fellows," but He was open to all the influences which move men's hearts and stir men's emotions. The natural joyousness, which would have always belonged to man had he but remained sinless and at peace with God, was a very distinct characteristic of the God-man. The circumstances in which He was placed soon crushed out this natural joy. All around Him was sorrow, and at the root of sorrow lay sin. Sin was the terrible burden He was ever bearing. Sin, which was the opposition to the Father's will; sin, which was the abnegation of all good. To Him it was something foul and loathsome beyond our conception. And it was everywhere. Among the

disciples whom He had chosen; among the friends who were to Him most dear; in the mother who had borne Him; in His family and home; equally as among the adversaries who hated Him, and the enemies who compassed His death. With this dark thing ever with Him, He could not in Himself be joyous. But He entered keenly into the joys of others. Nothing was further from Him than moroseness or gloom. When we think of the feast in the house of Zacchæus, or when we picture to ourselves the joyous gathering of publicans and such like persons that Levi collected to show his gladness, we may be sure that the happy joyousness was increased tenfold, because the Lord was present as a guest. A village wedding was the scene of His first miracle—the sign which He performed as the credentials of His mission: and it was wrought, not for what we should consider any great end, but to gratify a social want, and to minister to the gaiety of the assembled company. To His contemporaries it must have seemed utterly beneath the dignity of the Messiah. But to us, who have learned the full beauty of Christ's religion, how full it is of instruction, and in what complete harmony with the whole tenor of His life and revelation! For by it He proclaims His oneness with the humanity

which was around Him, and which He had adopted. By mingling in the social life of men, and by entering into human interests, He shows how He shares all human feelings. By His presence at this wedding He sanctifies human connections and human joys. By His consecration of marriage He consecrates all family ties, and hallows all the sweet delights of home. As we so often find it in the course of Christ's life, He makes concrete by an act the doctrine which He preached by word. Home-life was blessed upon earth, because it was the symbol of that perfect unity which would be revealed in heaven under the universal Fatherhood of God.

There is another miracle which has a bearing upon home-life — the healing of Peter's wife's mother. The Gospels are very reticent upon all personal matters. It is only by this incident that we learn that the Apostle Peter was a married man. The miracle is noteworthy, because, with the exception of the raising of Lazarus, which stands in a category of its own, it is the only miracle of healing that our Lord performed for the benefit of His own immediate circle. More than this, it is the only miracle, except perhaps that of the stater, mentioned in the New Testament, that was wrought directly in aid of those

connected by private ties. It comes out quite undesignedly that the Apostles could not use their gift of healing for their own purposes. St. Paul, who performed many miracles of healing, could not, *i.e.*, was not permitted to cure his personal friend Epaphroditus, although his illness was a cause of much trouble and distress to the Apostle. How earnestly the Apostle desired to use the power he possessed is evidenced by the fervent expression of gratitude in which he speaks of his recovery. With regard to our Lord there is no such record to guide us, but in this matter, as always, the silence of Scripture is most suggestive, and there is more than one word of Christ which implies that the same restraining influence, which prevented St. Paul from healing Epaphroditus, was present with the Lord Himself. The exception is, therefore, all the more worthy of our notice. There must have been some special reason in the mind of Christ which led to the healing of this fevered woman. It is narrated by all the three synoptical Evangelists, but the narrative in each is extremely short and concise. I do not think we can find in the story itself the clue to its right understanding. The key must rather be sought in the general plan of Christ's teaching. As the turning the water into wine was the

sanctification and blessing of all home-life, so it would appear, that, in this case, the Lord departed from His usual custom, in order to give an objective manifestation of the high honour He placed upon family affection, and to show the exalted place which all such ties of human love were to hold in the kingdom He was founding upon earth.

To turn to the home-life of the Lord Jesus Himself. The early life of Christ in His own home at Nazareth must be remembered in connection with these two miracles. If any home has ever been a happy one, if in any family peace and harmony obtained, surely, we should think, it would be in that home where Mary of Nazareth was the mother, and Christ was the elder brother. The reverse was the case. Once more Scripture meets us with silence. We know nothing of what passed during the early life of Christ in His home. His brothers' (whether they were actual brothers is in so far of no consequence) behaviour towards Him is not recorded. We are not told that, as is so often the case in home-life, some sister clung to her elder brother with a reverent and absorbing love. There is no word recorded. Yet we are not left in doubt. We can judge what the earlier years must have been from our knowledge of what

the later years were. And the story implied by those later years is a very sad one. Mary, notwithstanding the wonderful revelation made to her by the angel Gabriel, notwithstanding all the wondrous circumstances which had attended the birth of her Firstborn, notwithstanding that word which her Son had spoken to her in the Temple, had forgotten. In the quite early days she had kept all the marvels of His birth, and all the mysterious circumstances and sayings which attended it, and pondered them in her heart; but as time went on, she had forgotten. Possibly left widowed, with many children dependent upon her thought, the care and trouble of this world had overclouded the faith which once shone so brightly; possibly—for such is woman's nature—the very goodness of the child who was never naughty, or the sinlessness of the youth who never needed a rebuking word, estranged her affection, and led her to give her sympathy more to those other who assuredly often made her heart ache. There is a trace, though it may be but slight, of some such feeling in the account St. John gives of the first miracle. And it was to rise into much stronger relief, when she, who more than any other should have known that He must be about His Father's business, could be persuaded that He was beside

Himself. It needed all the bitterness of the cross to recall Mary's lost faith, and reawaken that love which it is almost inconceivable that she should have ever lost.

How contrary and opposed His brothers were is told us with great bitterness by the Apostle who was ever ready to resent any slight upon the Master whom he loved. St. John has recorded the sneering taunt of these unbelieving brothers, and he does not fail to add his own emphatic word of condemnation. Christ's sisters are never mentioned in connection with His life. We know He had sisters. We do not know how many; the name of none has been preserved to us. But we know that in the faithful band, which with untiring fidelity followed Him from Galilee to Judea, or from Jerusalem to Samaria, or into the retired parts of Peræa, not one of Christ's sisters had enrolled herself. It was not *their* sympathy which supported Him; it was not *their* love which ministered to His wants. They left all that to the hands of strangers. "He came unto His own," says the same Evangelist, looking back upon this history, "and His own received Him not." One of the bitterest ingredients in the earthly cup of Christ's sorrow must have been the want of kindness among the members of His own family, and

the lack of appreciation in His own home. The saddening fact that mother, brother, sister, all alike failed to understand Him, and refused to give Him the love and affection for which He yearned, must have exercised no small influence in darkening the life of Christ.

That this sorrow should have formed part of the daily cross which it was the Lord's lot to carry has its own lesson.

After all, the homes of this earth are not superlatively happy. Impatience and irritability, jealousy, ill-humour, and cross-grainedness, are almost inseparable from the human nature we know; and these give rise to constant recurring trials of temper. There are few homes in which differences do not occur, and in which diverse wills are not found in opposition; and there are too many, alas! in which the kindness and affection which should cluster round the hearth are displaced by jealous rivalry or actual hostility. The father makes an atmosphere of discomfort by giving way to outbursts of passion; the mother raises envy and disaffection by a foolish partiality for her favourite; in a word, that selfishness which is at the root of all evil, and which lurks in every human being, shows itself in the family as elsewhere, and creates dissension and dislike

where God intended that concord and peace should dwell. These things being so, it was well that they should enter into the life of Christ, and that He should have to bear with them. It is man's special comfort that the Saviour was tried in all points like as he is. No child of earth can ever say, I have something to bear which my Saviour did not suffer. If Christ's home had been peaceful and serene, as, at first sight, we think it should have been, then those who have unhappy homes could not take their burden to Him with a perfect feeling of satisfaction. But as it is, every child who feels the sting of unkindness, every brother who is aggrieved by a slight put upon him, every sister who thinks she does not meet with due appreciation, can go with their sore hearts to Christ, and can plead with Him in confidence, because, in the experience of His own early life, the Saviour passed through the very same trial which is now galling His young disciple.

There is another side to this picture on which the eyes of our mental vision are fixed. Christ, living as He did for the sake of men, dying as He did for them, had yet His own proper life. A life very real for Him; as real as the life we are living is real to us. For Him there were hopes and sorrows,

fears and joys, expectation and disappointment. For Him too, as for us, there was disillusion. Because He came to be the Saviour of the world, the years which He passed on earth were not the less for Himself crowded with feeling and emotion. Regarded in this light a deep pathos gathers round those incidents which specially touch the inner life of the Lord Jesus Christ. The healing of Peter's wife's mother, or the marriage in Cana, would be the cause of thoughts in Him which would not rise readily to the surface, and which would remain unspoken. Home was for others. For Christ there was no home-life. Peter might give Him shelter; Zacchæus might receive Him as his guest; Martha might with gladness welcome Him to her house; some disciple at Jerusalem might provide an upper chamber for the Passover; but Christ had no home. "The foxes had holes, and the birds of the air their nests, but the Son of Man had not where to lay His head." Doubtless there were causes which accounted for the homelessness of Christ. The nature of the work in which He was engaged precluded any settled home. He who was ever going from one town to another, who to-day was in Galilee, and to-morrow in Judæa, could have no settled place of abode. In this respect the Lord Jesus Christ

only shared a hardship which every itinerant missionary has to put up with. But the homelessness of Christ did not consist in this. It was a much deeper feeling that called forth His sorrowful exclamation, that He had not where He could lay His head. It was that He was set apart; that He was alone; that He was isolated; that, independently of any external accident of life, He could have no home; that by the very nature of the sacrifice He had to offer, He was shut out from that rest and sympathy which all men hope may one day be theirs.

Yet not altogether shut out from sympathy. The human life of the Son of Man was not wholly devoid of human joy. Home He might not have; but friends were not wanting. In that band He had gathered round Him there were many who gave Him all the devotion of their hearts. Thomas, doubting, gloomy, ever ready to look on the dark side of things, yet willing for the Master's sake to brave the dangers of Jerusalem; Peter, headstrong, rash, impetuous, hurried even into denial, yet willing to lay down his life; John, who in his old age never tired of telling that he was the disciple whom Jesus loved. And outside the immediate circle of the disciples there were true-hearted men who were ready to do Him

service. Nicodemus, who came to Him by night; Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead; Joseph of Arimathea, who dared to enter Pilate's presence to beg His body. Nor were women wanting. Women are ever ready to acknowledge what is good and great. In the lives of God's saints women have had their part, and often a very noble part. In the rugged life of the unloveable Benedict of Nursia the human affection of his twin sister Scholastica, struggling against the uncongenial spirit of monasticism, forms a very beautiful episode; the stern Hildebrand was feign to seek support and sympathy from Matilda of Tuscany; Macrine was the guiding star of Basil; the name of Monica is inseparable from St. Augustine, as that of Nonna is bound up with Gregory of Nazianzus. So it was in the life of Christ. Women, attracted by His absolute goodness, lay their loving homage at His feet. Like the wife of Chuza, they ministered to Him of their substance; like Martha, they opened to Him the doors of their houses; like the woman in the Pharisee's dining-hall, they sought from His grace the pardon of their sins. They followed Him, weeping, on the road to Golgotha; they stood beneath His cross; they were present at His burial; they were the first at the empty sepulchre;

Mary of Magdala, forgetting her own lack of strength, will bear away His corpse; Mary of Bethany, unconscious in her love, brings precious ointment to anoint His body for the burial; Mary of Nazareth, taught by the bitter sword which pierced her mother's heart, remembers as she sees Him die. And the Lord Jesus Christ, hanging in His last agony, bethinks Him again of the sacred tenderness of love which should surround the home, and to which His first miracle had been a witness, as He collects His last strength to place His mother in the charge of the disciple whom He loved.

But when we think of the home-life of Christ, the place which before all others comes to our memory is the little village of Bethany. Bethany lies on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives on the road to Jericho. The spot is a woody hollow, embowered among fruit trees, such as the olive, almond, fig and date-palm, and is surrounded by oaks and carobs. It occupies the extreme border of verdure, and "forms the last cluster of human habitations, before that strange succession of weird, featureless hills begins which terminate in the deep depression of the Jordan Valley and the Asphaltile Lake, the wall of the Moab and Peræan Mountains, with their ever varying hues,

bounding the distance." "It seems like a watch-tower set in the outermost fringe of life, overlooking the region of the shadow of death." Bonar speaks of the spot as remarkably beautiful; he describes in glowing language its calm and sweet repose, and represents it as the perfection of seclusion and lovely peace. Perhaps Dr. Bonar saw somewhat with the eyes of an imagination saturated with the beauty of the Gospel narrative, for neither Stanley nor Grove are enthusiastic in describing the beauties of Bethany. There is no mention of it either in the Old Testament or in the Apocrypha; and the modern village is ruinous and wretched, a wild mountain hamlet of some twenty families, the inhabitants of which compare unfavourably even with the general squalor and unthriftiness which is characteristic of the East. But to all readers of the Gospel story the place is still fragrant with the presence of Him who loved its seclusion, and the echoes of His voice still linger round it. Other spots are hallowed by the sufferings of the Son of Man; Bethany is sacred to the still gladness of Christ, and, though wet with the human tears of His sympathy, is as an oasis "bathed in light."

Here it was that a woman, named Martha, received Him into her house.

Once more Scripture is silent as to the details. We do not know how Martha became acquainted with Christ. She may herself have by some accident (as we speak) heard Him on one of His not rare visits to the capital, as He was preaching in the Temple-courts, or carrying on some discourse in the streets of Jerusalem. Or she may have had friends in the distant Galilee, and through their instrumentality may have learned to know Him. Or it may be that her brother Lazarus may have been attracted by the fame of the new Teacher, and may have joined himself to His company, and afterwards introduced Him to his sister's home. A casual expression of St. John leads us to suppose that this family, like so many others, had received signal benefit from the presence of Christ, and that a miracle had been wrought in their behalf. The terrible leprosy, so prevalent in the East, had, it is conjectured, laid its fell hand upon the master of the house. For apparently the same abode, which St. Luke calls the house of Martha, is called by St. John the house of Simon: and, consequently, it has been argued with great probability that Simon was the husband of Martha. She ever speaks with the air and conscious dignity of a married woman. This Simon, St. John informs us, was, that is to

say, had been, a leper. One reason, then, of the deep veneration and affection, with which the family at Bethany regarded the Lord Jesus Christ, may have been that the desolate home, isolated and darkened by the awful curse of leprosy, was restored again to health and civil life by the interposition of the Saviour.

Just as concerning the relationship between Simon and Martha we can only make guesses more or less probable, so about the personal history of Lazarus we know absolutely nothing. Conjecture tries to eke out the details, and ecclesiastical tradition supplements the story with a quantity of irrelevant and foolish additions, but of real knowledge there is none. Of the external circumstances of the two sisters we know scarcely more. The characters, however, of the two women stand out in great clearness. A word or two of St. Luke, and the vivid narrative of St. John, has made them to us as household words. Martha, the bustling housewife, full of anxious care for the guest she has welcomed to her house, and somewhat burdened with her work, is not without a touch of natural irritability and pardonable impatience. Mary is still and quiet; her attitude at the feet of Jesus betokens a mind calm and peaceful; but she is keenly sensitive in feeling,

and on more than one occasion we see her yielding to the passionate emotions of an impulsive but restrained nature.

Such was the family in which the Lord Jesus was received, and in which, more than elsewhere, it was given Him to enjoy the quiet pleasure of home-life. There are many indications which show how keenly our Lord appreciated it. The "memories of Bethany" have left a very decided impression upon the Gospel histories—an impression due to the deep influence they exercised upon the human heart of Christ. Details of that sweet, restful home-life there are none, or almost none. St. Luke has preserved a word which Christ spoke. St. John narrates, with more fulness than is the wont of the Evangelists, the great miracle of which the little village was the scene. The other two—St. Matthew and St. Mark—as well as St. John, tell the story of the anointing, which is the sequel to the miracle. There are, besides, one or two allusions to Bethany, which, were it not that we know of the intimate connection of the spot with the dearest and happiest associations of Christ, would be passed over as mere geographical notes of the narrators. It is from these scattered hints that we learn all that can be known of those things which made Christ's home-life at Bethany

so beautiful. With zealous service Martha ministered to His physical necessities; with the docile love of the pupil for the Master, Mary sat at His feet and listened to His word. Lazarus is not mentioned; but we may be sure that he regarded Christ with the enthusiastic devotion which the young are ever ready to bring to those who have won their admiration and reverent esteem.

I said that little was known about this home-life of Christ at Bethany. But one thing is known, and that one thing is of more value than all else besides. The heartfelt affection with which the brother and the sisters looked upon Christ was returned to the full by the Lord Jesus. The Evangelist has recorded that "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus;" and it was this human affection which caused Bethany to be in an especial sense "the home" of Christ; which made it His quiet retreat during the troublous days which closed His earthly life; which led Him to choose it as the last spot His feet should touch at the time of His ascension; and which, in the future, marks it as the first spot on which His foot shall stand when He comes again in glory.

IX.

*THE PRAYERS OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.**

A MYSTERY hangs round every prayer of the Saviour. Whether we follow Him in the early morning to the solitary place; or whether we watch with Him through the eastern night on the lonely mountain top; or whether we hear the invocation to His father burst from His lips at the grave of Lazarus; or whether we witness His last agony of prayer amid the shade of the olive trees in Gethsemane—wonder and awe take possession of our minds. That the Son in the days of His incarnation should long for intercourse with His Father; that He should often seek silence and retirement for the purpose of communion with Him, can easily be understood. But that the Lord, even in His humiliation, should have positive need of prayer for grace and strength is a mystery beyond our comprehension. That the body should

* This essay originally appeared in the *Journal of Sacred Literature*; it has been revised, and is reprinted with considerable alterations.

grow weary; that the flesh should succumb to wants and necessities inherent in its nature; that the human frame should assert its rights, and send Him athirst to the woman of Samaria, or rock Him to sleep on the sea of Galilee; these things neither surprise nor startle us. But that the soul of the Lord Jesus should become faint; that it should show sympathy with the weakness of the body and share in its imperfections, is a fact well calculated to fill us with astonishment.

It might be naturally supposed that the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ was only communion with His Father. If there were no express testimony of revelation on the subject, it would reasonably be surmised that nothing beyond this was thought of; and that the Lord Jesus sought the presence of God as we might seek the presence of those we love. But such is not the fact. The prayer of Christ involves much more than this; it is the expression of His want; it arose out of His sense of need, as truly as the prayer of the believer arises out of his sense of need. The prayer of Christ is the earnest supplication for guidance; it is the seeking for assistance; it is the cry of distress; it is the outpouring of His soul in trouble; it is the heartfelt entreaty for strength to enable Him to bear up under the pressure of physical

pain and mental horror. We see the Man Christ Jesus, in all the weakness of His manhood, looking for aid and help from His God. And this must be so because of our Lord's true humanity. However much the divinity and humanity blended in Him, the Divine never interfered with the working of the human nature. He was perfect man; He shared all the want and need of man's nature; He felt all its weaknesses. The Divine which existed within Him never raised Him above and beyond the humanity He had condescended to assume; it never exalted Him into a sphere freed from the struggle and conflict to which flesh is heir, or prevented Him from sharing with men their frailties and their cares: He was constrained with men to seek for the strength necessary to bear them in the lowly attitude of prayer. Perhaps nowhere does the humanity of the Lord Jesus shine forth more clearly and conspicuously, than when bowed in heart and troubled in soul, in all the consciousness of human weakness, He pours out His supplications before His God.

It is the object of this essay to illustrate the human characteristics of Christ by contemplating Him in the attitude of prayer We would attempt to read the mystery of the incarnation by gazing

on the mind of Jesus as it lies unveiled before His Father in the act of prayer. A few passages of Scripture have been handed down to us, in which the heart of the praying Saviour is thus presented to our scrutiny. Such passages can never fail to be of inestimable preciousness to the Church at large; but they possess a double value to those who love to explore the heights and depths of that humanity of our Lord, which, assumed once in humility, shall be His triumphant crown of glory throughout the ages of eternity. May we draw nigh in lowliness and reverence, looking for the gracious assistance of His good Spirit to teach us.

The first recorded instance from which we can gather anything of the nature of our Lord's prayer, is in Luke vi. 12.

It was the commencement of His ministry. He was about to choose from the general gathering of His disciples certain men, who were to form an inner circle, and enter into closer communion and relationship with Himself. Much, as we judge, depended on the choice. The men now selected were to be specially taught and trained under His own eye. It was to them that the mission of upholding His teaching was to be committed when He should be removed. Whether His doctrine

should be strangled at its birth, or whether it should be propagated throughout the world, depended (humanly speaking) on the wisdom of His choice. And more than this, these men were to be His companions and associates. On their faithfulness, on their friendship, on their power of understanding Him, His own happiness must in a great measure depend. When the world scoffed, and Pharisees taunted, and His usual followers were offended, it is to them He must have recourse. With them His chafed spirit must find calm and repose; from them He must look for all the sympathy He could hope to obtain. Whether He thought of the future prospects of the religion He came to found, or whether He had regard to His own comfort and well-being, the choice was alike momentous. St. Luke informs us what means were taken to insure the most fitting persons. "And it came to pass in those days, that He went up into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." We here see the Lord Jesus offering a prayer for guidance at a critical point of His career. He did not exert the infallible virtue of the divinity which dwelt within Him; He did not at once proceed in the power of the Godhead, without hesitation or deliberation, to make choice of the most suitable instruments

for His purpose; He did not exercise the exalted prerogative of reading men's hearts, and laying bare by His omnipotence their past and future before His eyes; but He watches their conduct, He converses with them, He frequents their society, He draws His conclusions from their words and actions, He marks their characters, and finally, at once acting like man, and giving to man an example to follow, He lays the matter before God. Then He chooses.

How far in this matter the human instinct was corrected and controlled by the divine intuition, must ever be unknown. The conclusion arrived at will vary according to the peculiar cast of mind of the inquirer. Those who are accustomed to regard our Lord chiefly on the divine side of His character, will make the divine element predominate largely in the reasons which influenced the choice; those who contemplate the Saviour principally from the human aspect, will refer the decision in the main to the insight into character which Christ possessed as man. There is, of course, no question as to the capability of the Redeemer to exercise supernatural power; the point is, did He do so? and in what measure? In the case of Peter and Nathanael (John i. 42; i. 47) He undoubtedly read their character by

divine penetration without previous knowledge; and the words of St. John (vi. 64) incline us to believe the same of Judas. The hypothesis of some German theologians that the words are not to be interpreted strictly, but that St. John, writing after the event, imputed a knowledge to Christ which He really did not possess, cannot be received by those who believe in the plenary inspiration of Scripture. The name of Boanerges, though according to St. Mark (iii. 17) given to the sons of Zebedee upon the call to the Apostolate, and after an opportunity had been afforded of tracing their characters, might have been previously added, as in the case of Simon Peter. The fact, however, that He did not choose them at once, nor until by personal intercourse He had been able to judge of their dispositions of fitness for their office, and still more the prayer for guidance and direction, proves to demonstration, that on this occasion our Lord was not wholly guided by the divine omniscience which dwelt within Him. The incident shows us the man Christ Jesus acting as a man; it holds Him up as a model which we may follow; it gives us a beautiful picture of His perfect humanity; and it exhibits Him coming as a member of the human family to seek for aid and counsel from

the great Hearer of prayer, to whom all flesh shall come.

The next prayer of our Lord that we shall bring forward is the one pronounced at the grave of Lazarus. It is a prayer for assistance in working a miracle; or rather it is a thanksgiving for the assistance which had been given Him. The expressed thanksgiving includes the unuttered prayer. Our Lord on His approach to Bethany had been met by Martha, and joined a little later by Mary, and the Jews who had come to comfort her. In a series of broken, dark, and enigmatical utterances, He had raised the expectations of those who were susceptible to His teaching for some mighty display of the divine power. It was a presentiment rather than a definite idea; and none, unless perhaps we except Mary who had been accustomed to penetrate deeper into her Lord's mind than the rest, seem to have looked for the actual resurrection of Lazarus from the dead. Amid the tears of the mourning followers, and even of Christ Himself, they reached the tomb. Silencing Martha by a word, He commands to take away the stone. Then, before the open grave and in presence of the dead, "Jesus lifted up His eyes and said: Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me; and I knew that Thou

hearest Me always, but because of the people which stood by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

These words furnish us with the materials for tracing out the means by which Christ wrought His miracles. It teaches that they were not accomplished by the inherent power of the divinity which dwelt within Him, but followed as the result of faith and prayer. The power of working miracles was *given* to the Son. It was a power given in answer to prayer; a testimony in some degree to Himself, but in a much greater degree to the people, that the Father heard and acknowledged Him. In His filial relation all that He had was not His own, but was bestowed upon Him by the Father. During His humiliation upon earth, the acts of power which He manifested were not done in virtue of the glory which He possessed as the Son of God from all eternity. That glory He had laid aside when He became the Son of Man. The grace, and truth, and power which beamed forth in Him during the period of His earthly life was the fulness of the Father within; the fruit of that abiding Spirit which was given to Him without measure. It is the express testimony of Jesus (John v. 19), that the Son can do nothing of Himself, and that His power is a derived power

drawn from the Father. The works of Christ did not proceed from His own will, but from the will of the Father; and in like manner the energy by which the will is inspired does not proceed immediately from the Son, but only mediately, having its source in the Father who is the fountain (ἀρχὴ) of all life and power.

There is a very noticeable distinction between the prayers of the Godman, and the prayers which proceed from all others of the human race. There was always harmony between the mind of Christ and the mind of God. We know that God hears and answers the prayers of all who cry unto Him; but these are answered, not according to the letter of the petition, but in such a way as God sees most fitting. No man can ever say—at least in the same sense as the Lord Jesus—I know that Thou hearest me always, because in no man is there perfect oneness of will with the Divine will. Our faith is as a grain of mustard seed, the faith of the Son was whole and perfect. His own word so often repeated, and which holds good of all, is equally applicable to Himself in His human relationship, "According unto thy faith be it unto thee."

While, however, we admit fully the subordination of the Son to the Father, it must not be

forgotten that the Son is very God, of the same essence and substance with the Father. His miracles were performed by faith and prayer only because He willed that they should be so performed. None could take from Him that divinity which was intrinsically His own; but it was the good pleasure of the Son to veil that inherent glory which He possessed in the bosom of the Father before the world was. Nor has this subordination any tendency to uphold Arian or Socinian errors. It only exists when we view our Lord from the side of His humanity. When we pass over to the other side, and consider Him in His Divine relationship, it ceases altogether. If one discourse (John v.) declares most plainly that the Son can do nothing of Himself, another (John x.) most emphatically vindicates His Godhead. However much later sceptics may endeavour to explain away the ἓν ἐσμεν of Christ, contemporary Jews understood it rightly enough as claiming equality with Jehovah. They sought to stone the speaker as being guilty of blasphemy. The line separating the Divinity from the humanity is vague and indistinct. In almost every recorded instance it is impossible to define exactly how much is to be set down to the human nature, how much is to be attributed

to the Divine. I think we shall best arrive at a correct interpretation of Scripture, and best be able to appreciate the character of our Lord, by attributing to the humanity all which seems to belong to the humanity, and to the Divinity all which seems to belong to the Divinity; without being too careful to harmonize results, which, inasmuch as they spring from a union to our capacities unfathomable, must be necessarily marvellous and mysterious.

Some have supposed that the raising of Lazarus was essentially different from the other miracles of Christ. Believing that other miracles were wrought by Christ's indwelling Divine power, they regard this as accomplished by God for Him, and class it among answers to prayer. But as this is the only miracle in which we are told anything of the means by which Christ performed them, it seems much more reasonable to take it as a type than as an exception. It is more reasonable to suppose that *all* the miracles of our Lord were dependent upon the power given to Him—were, in fact, answers to prayer, than that the raising of Lazarus was a solitary instance. This conclusion is strengthened, we may say proved, by two considerations: the dependence of the Son upon the Father, of which we have

already spoken; and the fact that as prayer and thanksgiving were not isolated fragments in Christ's life, He could have expressed Himself in like terms in regard to any of His miracles.

We proceed to the Lord's agony of prayer in Gethsemane. "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Nowhere, perhaps, is the manhood of Christ seen so plainly as here. Apprehension, trouble, dismay, anguish of soul, shrinking from death, and dread at the more fearful conflict with sin and hell, stir His being to its depths. "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Every feeling, which naturally would arise in our hearts at the contemplation of a prospect so terrible, exercise their full force in Him. It is the Man of Sorrows going forth in all the weakness of man's nature to suffering and death. It is the son of the human mother, in all the abasement of the inferior nature, about to drink the cup of anguish to the dregs. It is Jesus "in the days of His flesh" carrying the pent-up agony of His life before His Father, at the moment that He is about to consummate His self-surrender by His death. But the divinity is only veiled, not concealed. Ever and anon it flashes forth in brightness all the more intense for

the darkness which surrounds it. The calm, sorrowful rebuke to the sleeping disciples, the unmoved steadfastness of the divine will, the falling backward of the armed multitude at His word of power, the stern command to the too impetuous Peter, the lofty tone in which He declares that more than twelve legions of angels are only waiting a nod to hasten to His rescue, the healing of the stricken servant's ear—these things proclaim to all who possess hearing ears, that a greater than any mere child of Adam is here. If the humanity is most prominent, we have not to look far for manifest tokens of the divine within Him. In the agony of Gethsemane, as in every other incident of His mysterious life, the humanity and divinity find in Him their meeting-place.

Our present object, however, is with the human side of this wonderful event, and to that we will turn our attention.

He had risen from the sacramental table; He had pronounced those beautiful farewell discourses which St. John has recorded for the everlasting benefit of the Church; He had given utterance to that inimitable prayer, in which, viewing all things as already accomplished, He enters proleptically on His mediatorial and high-priestly

office. They sing a hymn, and go to the Mount of Olives. A change comes over Him. One of those sudden transitions, to which the mind is liable in seasons of great emotion and excitement, seizes on Him. The quiet, Godlike calm which He had preserved while comforting His disciples, and while engaged in prayer for them, passes away, and gives place to an agony of feeling. The human soul gives way before the pressure of that hour. He is sore amazed.

The garden of Gethsemane was a place to which the Lord often resorted. He had often been accustomed to cross the brook Cedron, and lead His disciples into the quiet retirement of the olive-trees which grew around. It had many times before seen the Saviour bending in prayer, or pouring out thanksgiving or adoration before His Father. But it is different to-night. It is now to witness His last agony of prayer. The great sacrifice is to be completed. The last conflict is to be fought and won. Satan is to be crushed and vanquished. The sinless Lamb of God tastes death for every man. He bears the curse of sin. He makes atonement for His people. But even the God-man staggers beneath the load; even He can scarce sustain the burden of a world's iniquity. In conquering He grows

faint. Nature can endure no longer. His sweat is as great drops of blood falling to the ground.

In the midst of this anguish a little trait brings home to our hearts the reality of the manhood of Christ. In this hour of weakness and abasement He longs for human sympathy and fellowship. He would not be alone at the last trying time. As stay after stay broke from Him, as the last final conflict comes nigher and nigher, as the reality of fearful death—doubly fearful to the Sinless One—rose before His view, as sin embracing Him in her shadow overwhelmed Him with unutterable horror, He clings almost convulsively to the last earthly support left Him. He falls back on the love and faithfulness of His chosen companions. Charging them to tarry in wakefulness and prayer, He leaves the greater part of His disciples at a little distance. But He chooses three of their number to watch and pray close beside Him in His temptation. As in His glorification on the mount He had willed to have sharers in His triumph, so now in His agony shall these same three favoured followers share His humiliation and support Him under it. There is something exquisitely beautiful in this human craving of the Saviour for companionship in His anguish; something which enables us at once to recognize

Him as one who is our brother-man; something which proves to us intuitively, that, in taking upon Himself our likeness and our flesh, the Redeemer assumed all the inward feelings and longings to which our nature is subject. And at the same time He blesses and hallows the interchange of love and the reliance upon fellowship. If the Son of God would not forego the solace and aid of those He loved, how shall we, in our despair, affect to despise the sympathy of friendship which He has hallowed to us by His example?

Lastly, His prayer was heard. He was saved in that last hour of darkness. This is not only to be inferred from analogy; it is not only to be deduced from the word of the Lord, that the Father always heard Him; it is distinctly asserted by inspired authority. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us (v. 7) that in the days of His flesh when He offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death, He was heard on account of His religious resignation (ἀπο τῆς εὐλαβείας). Already does glory begin to illumine the darkness of that night. The angel descends to strengthen Him, His enemies fall backward at His word, His accusers are confounded in His presence, and, if He dies, that

very death is His glory and triumphant crown. "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honour, and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

We must not enter on the other recorded prayers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Of the terrible cry to the Father for help, followed almost synchronously by the expression of submission to the Father's will (John xii. 27, 28), we have already spoken when we considered our Lord's temptations; of the high-priestly prayer I hardly dare to speak. Any brief comment on such a prayer would be unsatisfactory and incomplete; and secondly, though like every other word of Christ it bears the impress of the nature He had adopted, it is rather that glorified humanity with

which our Lord is now clothed in the kingdom of His Father, than the humanity in which Jesus trod our earth as the meek and lowly Son of Man.

Let us sum up briefly what has been said, and endeavour to see the inferences which are to be deduced from it.

1. The prayers of Jesus prove His dependence upon the Father. The mere fact that Christ offered up veritable prayer to God; that He sought from Him strength and assistance, guidance and support; that in the time of His trouble, and in the agony of His temptation, He had recourse to Him, prove that in Himself—that is, in His human nature—He had neither strength nor power independent of the Father. Before choosing His apostles He seeks by prayer the divine guidance and direction; before working the most stupendous miracle that He wrought while on earth, He obtains the power by which He performed it by prayer; when the first presentiment of horror and trouble overshadows His soul, He cries out in His distress to God to save Him; and when the time of the last agony has come, and He stands face to face with all the powers of death and hell, He nerves Himself for the conflict by supplication, and is strengthened by the angel sent to succour Him. We see, then,

that the Lord Jesus in His human capacity does not look within for strength, but raises His eyes to Heaven and looks for help from thence. We do not see Him asserting His own independent and underived power; we do not find Him claiming that equality with God which He might rightfully have demanded; we do not observe Him exacting the worship due to Deity, nor arrogating to Himself openly the attributes of the Godhead. All that would have been incompatible with the obedience that He came to fulfil. But we see Him in lowliness and humility; we behold Him in the form of a servant; we view Him meek in heart and gentle in spirit, referring everything to His Father, submitting in all things His own will to God, careless of His own glory and estimation, showing the constant feeling of resignation and dependence that ever dwelt in His heart by His once outspoken word: "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

2. The prayers of Jesus prove His inferiority to the Father. Dependence of itself implies inferiority. The inferior is succoured and assisted by the superior. The inferior prays to, and supplicates the superior. As inherent possessor of the Godhead, and as of one substance with the Father, Christ is equal with Jehovah; but in His filial

relationship as the Son, and in His Messianic relationship as the Sent, the Lord Jesus Christ is the inferior of the Father. Equal to the Father as the only-begotten, born before creation; inferior to the Father as the human Son of the human mother. Nor need we fear to acknowledge this inferiority of the Son, as if it detracted in any way from the glory of Christ. Those who entertain such a thought can know little of the glory which lies in humility, and the honour which is hidden in submission. There is no brighter jewel in the crown of the Lord's humanity than His willingness to become lowly. The very cause of His present glory in the kingdom of heaven is that He was content to empty Himself of His glory. Because He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness and fashion of men; therefore hath God highly exalted Him, and given Him a name that is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

3. The prayers of Jesus show the perfectness of His humanity. They are especially precious

to us on this account. The infinite, absolute, pure, sole, essential Spirit, dwelling in the loneliness of inaccessible light, dazzles our finite comprehension. Such a God is to us an unknown God. But we are at no loss to understand a praying Saviour. The very act of prayer speaks to us of wants and need, of hesitation and doubt, of weakness and infirmity, of conflict and struggle, of sorrow and suffering, of temptation and sin; and these things need no explanation. We know them, each one for himself, only too well; and we are at once disposed to give our confidence to one who, since He knows them also, can feel for us, as we suffer under them. The weakest, the most ignorant, and the most sinful, feel that they may without misgiving approach a praying Saviour. They know that if He has Himself felt the need of prayer, He is not likely to refuse those who come unto Him by prayer. The agony of Christ, the human craving for sympathy of Christ, the human tears of Christ, the human supplications of Christ for help under the pressure of His anguish, the human troubling of the soul of Christ, have strange power to touch the deepest chords in the heart of man. Time takes from them nothing of their power; distance deprives them nothing of their strength. The

scene is all as present with us, as if we ourselves beheld it. The story is as fresh and heart-stirring as if it occurred but yesterday.

The prayers of the Lord Jesus were doubtless of service to Himself in calling down from Heaven the strength which He needed. But their usefulness does not end here. From the time they first were uttered, the prayers of Jesus have been an estimable blessing to every man, or woman, or little child, who has ever heard them; for the prayers of the suffering Saviour are, as it were, an irresistible magnet to draw into union and fellowship with Himself, the hearts of all who in their trouble and distress have felt their own need of prayer.

4. The prayers of Jesus differ from the prayers of ordinary men. The prayers of Jesus were always heard and answered in exact accordance with their intention. As He possessed the Spirit without measure, and as His will was always one with the Father in the ground of the divine unity, it is impossible that He could ever offer a prayer which was not in strict accordance with the mind of God. But as the minds of men —even of the best men—are only imperfectly taught by the Divine Spirit, they are continually offering up prayers which are incompatible with

the will of God; and such prayers cannot be granted. At least they cannot be granted according to their literal intention, but only according to their spirit. The prayers of Jesus are also marked by another difference. In virtue of His oneness with the Father, Christ could use language which would be unbecoming in the mouth of man. We find, accordingly, that He demands as a right, rather than supplicates as a favour. This is conspicuous in the prayer at the grave of Lazarus, where the supplication is altogether unuttered, and takes the form of a thanksgiving for the answer given; and it is still more prominent in the high-priestly prayer, where the authoritative θέλω (I will) of the Mediator assumes actual equality with God.

5. The prayers of Jesus uttered upon earth enable us to understand the intercessory prayers, which He now offers in heaven for His people, as their mediatorial High Priest. Without the prayers of Jesus, or without the knowledge that He uttered prayers out of His own sense of need, we could not find much comfort in His intercessions for us. That He learned to pray while on earth on account of the trouble and sorrow which He Himself felt, is the sure proof we possess, that He can rightly pray for us according to our need.

"We have not a high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are," therefore we can "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." When any sorrowing, broken-hearted child of earth comes to the mediating Saviour with his tale of grief, the Lord Jesus is able to look back upon His own earthly life and traces out the sorrow in His own experience. There is no fear of His misunderstanding the sorrow, as earthly friends are so apt to do. He sees the whole heart; He knows every bitter feeling; He counts every tear; and, what is more, He sympathises with it in all the overflowing compassion of His divine human heart. Care may be soothed; anxiety may be relieved; every morbid feeling hushed to rest by being placed on Him, who not in vain experienced every human ill; or if in His loving wisdom He should see that the thorn in the flesh is doing His work; that it is making us more humble, more prayerful, more reliant upon Him and more Christ-like, and so should not intercede for its removal, He will still present our "Save me from this hour," before His Father's throne, and send us away strengthened by His might.

6. Lastly, the prayers of Jesus are an example for us. Oh! if He needed prayer, how much more must we need prayer. If He had recourse to prayer in the days of His humiliation and trial, how much more cause is there for us to be found instant in prayer. As sorrows pressed on Him, so will they press on us; as trouble of soul overwhelmed Him, so will trouble of soul, and weakness of spirit also, overwhelm us; as temptation tried Him sorely, so will temptation try us sorely; as Satan fought with Him, so will Satan fight with us. Christ conquered by the intenseness of His earnest prayer. Let us tread in His steps. We shall find that prayer has not lost its power; as it availed to "save" Him, so shall it surely avail to save us.

X.

THE THOUGHTFULNESS OF CHRIST.

THERE is a much shorter word than that chosen for the title of this essay that, perhaps, more exactly describes the mental quality which it is its object to discuss. This word is tact. Tact, as everybody knows, is derived from a Latin word signifying touch; and it represents that instinct which places one man in touch with another. It differs from sympathy in so much that it does not necessarily mean feeling another's pain, or even bearing another's sorrow. It is a quality which enables a man to do or say the right thing at the right time, and, negatively, to avoid those irritating blunders of which persons devoid of tact are so often guilty. It tends to make the wheels of life run smoothly more even than do those higher qualities which are more useful in action, and which make greater demands upon our admiration. Tact does not mean kindness, or good feeling, or forbearance, although it will rarely be largely present in those

persons who are deficient in these attributes. Tact is an understanding insight, the result usually of thoughtful consideration for others.

Tact is an essentially human quality. It is something by which man regulates his conduct towards his fellow-man. It does not belong to God; and it does not belong to the divine side of our Lord's character. When our thoughts turn to Him who by His almighty power ruleth and upholdeth all things, the care and thoughtfulness He showeth for the beings whom His hand has fashioned must be expressed by other words than tact. Our ideas run in a different and a higher channel. The humility which veils the face, and the lowliness which bow the knee in the presence of the Highest and the Holiest, prevent anything like a sense of touch between man and God. Mercy and compassion, goodness and loving kindness, forbearance and justice and truth, these are the words we use when we represent to our minds as best we may the motives which regulate the conduct of the Creator towards His creatures.

But the Lord Jesus Christ was perfect man. He moved among men as one among his fellows. No sinless human quality could be wanting in Him; and in Him all men's best instincts were present. With the profoundest reverence we may

say without misgiving that the man Christ Jesus was in perfect touch with the nature He had made His own, that is to say, with man. One, whose every word was prompted by goodness, and whose every act was the result of unselfish desire for the welfare of others, could not be wanting in that thoughtfulness which gives birth to the highest tact. Consequently it is a marked characteristic in the Saviour's mental disposition. The difficulty is not to find instances in which the Lord Jesus Christ showed tact; the hard matter would be to find actions in which tact cannot be traced.

In considering the life of the Lord Jesus Christ the student of Scripture cannot fail to be struck with the exceeding richness and many-sidedness of every event recorded. The simple fact means so much. The side-lights and cross-lights are as full of meaning and instruction as the front view on which the direct sunlight falls. The raising of a dead man may be to us a sign of power; it may be an evidence of the Godhead of the Eternal Son; it may be the wonder of a dead man recalled to life; it may be a symbol of the resurrection; it may be an act of pity for a mother's sorrow; it may be the expression of the tenderness and kindness of Christ. We may regard it as it

affected the dead man himself; we may think of it as touching the dead man's relatives; we may consider the effect upon those who witnessed it; we may try and spell out the motives in the mind of Christ which led to its performance; or we may endeavour to trace the impression which it produced upon the Lord Himself. The combinations and permutations are almost endless; and each carries its own special lesson. In trying, therefore, to study out the Lord's character we have continually to refer to the same incident, or to go back to the same miracle, or to quote the same word, in order to obtain an insight into its significance as it bears upon the matter which is immediately under our notice.

To turn to particular instances in which the thoughtful consideration of Christ for the feelings of others is evidenced.

What wonderful tact our Lord showed in His conversation with the woman at the well in Samaria! She was a sinner. Even allowing for the latitude which the Jewish law of divorce authorised, it could not have been easy for one woman to have had five husbands without considerable moral blame attaching to her. But there was actual and positive sin. "He whom thou now hast is not thy husband." Yet our Lord has

no direct word of rebuke. He had asked a favour of her. In a sense He was under obligation to her, if only because she had not refused His request. And Christ was not forgetful of the laws of courtesy. So when the woman, to hide her conscious shame, tries to give a turn to the conversation by touching on a controverted point of theology, our Lord follows her lead. He does not improve the occasion as some in these modern times, with more ardour than discretion, would have done. He did not warn her of the punishment sin would entail. He did not threaten her with future vengeance if she remained impenitent. But He let the one word He had spoken remain to do its work, and he talks on calmly and quietly about the difference existing between the ritual of Samaria and Judea. Warnings and threats would probably have produced the same results which they are very apt to produce to-day. They would have excited her anger, and made her indignant, and left her callous and hardened. But the tact of the Lord Jesus worked far otherwise. The one word spoken made her think, and thought brought conviction. He had told her one single fact; but the impression left upon her mind was so strong that He seemed to have laid her whole life bare. "Come," she cries, upon her return

to the city, "come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did."

The marriage scene in Cana, with its many-sided teachings, has been so often referred to in these essays that it may suffice to point the tact with which our Lord avoided even the appearance of any shame falling upon the bridegroom. The servants who had been the actual agents were aware of what had occurred. For that there was no help. But beyond them none knew. The governor of the feast supposed it to be wine which the bridegroom had specially reserved to the last. And although the Evangelist is silent, we may well suppose that it was the gratitude of the bridegroom himself which caused the miracle to be known among the guests. Christ wrought the miracle silently, as it were in secret, in order that by His thoughtful consideration the giver of the feast might be saved from the shame which even an accidental neglect of the stringent laws of hospitality would entail.

Perhaps in no miracle is the ready tact of Christ shown more than in the raising of the daughter of Jairus. He was surrounded by people when the stricken father came with his pitiful prayer. Naturally these people followed. Upon the way occurred the episode of the healing of the woman

with the issue of blood. During the halt which this occasioned, tidings came that the sick girl had died. Doubtlessly it appeared to Jairus that our Lord delayed heartlessly, as He stood there speaking words which might well seem unnecessary when every moment was precious. And the delay had been fatal. The few minutes occupied had been sufficient to take away all hope, for in them his child had died. Jairus saw afterwards, what we see in reading the story, how this incident, so trying then to his patience, was in reality designed to strengthen his faith, and unconsciously to prepare his mind for the greater blessing which was to be accorded to him. He understood in the end that there was no heartlessness in Christ. But this is hardly the special point to which attention should be directed in connection with the subject we are considering. The Lord Jesus showed His tact by checking the advance of the multitude. Jairus had just heard of the death of the child whom he had hoped to save. Around him was a crowd, doubtless to some extent sympathising with his grief, but still a crowd of strangers more intent upon the wonder it hoped to witness than caring for the sorrow of the hapless ruler. This crowd Christ holds back by a word. "He suffered no man to follow Him,

but Peter, and James, and John the brother of James." Our Lord more than once showed this power of staying people when their curiosity was raised, or their anger excited. Probably it was by a power residing in the Man, and not any supernatural influence exercised by the Son of God, that the Lord Jesus was able to produce this effect. That, however, is not the present point. What we have to notice is the tact—tact born of kindness and good feeling and sympathy—which the Lord displayed. By its exercise He saved Jairus from a surrounding which in the first bitter moments of his grief must have been unbearable.

In the miracle of the paralysed man, borne of four, and let down into His presence through the roof, our Lord showed something higher than any human tact. The insight, which led Him to observe in this case, and as far as we know in this case only, that the sufferer was ready to see that something worse than any physical evil lay behind the bodily pain which he endured, belonged to the divine, rather than to the human side of Christ's character. But it was the same kind of mental touch which in man enables one person to read the thought in another's mind, and the same thoughtfulness which leads to its due answering. Man may "minister to a mind dis-

eased," and may point to the one Saviour from whom all can obtain pardon; but none other than the Son of Man could have pronounced the authoritative "thy sins be forgiven thee," and only He, by healing the spiritual nature, could at the same time have cured the bodily infirmity which was its external expression. So again in the healing of the man by the pool of Bethesda. He had lain there crippled for thirty-eight years. What tact the Lord showed in inspiriting hope into one in whom all hope had died out, and in infusing energy into a mind in which energy had been well nigh killed by despair! He had lain there so long that the very wish of being healed had ceased with the hope of healing. We can imagine the uprising of new desire, which must have dawned in the lack-lustre eyes, as the stranger suggested the possibility that the withered limbs might attain new vigour. And we can follow almost step by step, as, with infinite gentleness and tact, the Saviour leads on the wretched man from the lethargy of despair to renewed life. One less wise, with less understanding, and less insight, would, in their very anxiety, have hurried on the cure. But the Lord Jesus Christ with untiring patience prepares for the blessing He purposes to confer, and so enhances the value of

the benefit. Here, too, as in the man with the paralytic stroke, the spiritual healing is brought into prominence. There is doubtless some connection between the Lord's words which reawoke the activities of his soul, and the man's presence in the Temple. And it is also surely not without its significance, that the full benefit of healing is conferred, and a desire after the good called forth, before Christ utters that word of warning so full of deep and awful solemnity: "Behold thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee."

The way in which the Lord Jesus acted with regard to St. Peter affords an excellent illustration of Christ's sense of touch. Peter was warm-hearted and faithful, but impetuous and irresolute, and ever acting on the spur of the moment. In consequence of this excitable temperament he was continually doing or saying something unadvised or ill-considered. On such occasions Christ never met him with direct contradiction. The Lord is walking across the water. The waves are high; the wind is tempestuous. "Lord, bid me come unto Thee," says the apostle. Christ asks no questions, suggests no doubts, offers no warning. He simply bids him come. Brought face to face with the danger, Peter's faith

and courage, as on many another occasion, failed. By allowing him to have his own way, and suffering him to take his own course, Christ read him a lesson on the danger of self-confidence. It was a lesson not easily learned by one of St. Peter's unstable disposition. So it had to be repeated. And it is repeated much in the same way. Strong in his undoubted affection, the Apostle, setting himself before the others his companions, had declared loudly that, though all should be offended, yet would he be offended never. Christ thereupon gave him a warning: "Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice." Peter is louder than ever in his self-confident protestations. Christ passed by the words as if He heard them not. He gave no further warning; He did not point out the danger of this over-confidence, but he left Peter to learn for himself the sharp lesson he would not fail this time to lay to heart. So long as the excitement lasted, St. Peter was the foremost and the bravest. It is his sword that flashes from its scabbard; it is his hand that strikes the blow in his Master's defence. Nay, more, when the first panic was over, it was still this faithful apostle alone, with the exception of St. John whom love made brave, who dared to follow to the High

Priest's palace. Here he is alone. There are no companions whose presence shall help to keep up his courage. John has penetrated far in and is out of sight. All around are faces unsympathetic or hostile. His Galilean accent is derided. His presence with Christ in the garden is remembered. The daring which animated him in Gethsemane in the face of active foes oozes away before this jeering tribe of serving-men and serving-women. And so the word of Christ, which when spoken seemed utterly impossible, was fulfilled, and ere the cock crew, Peter had thrice denied his Lord. Happily for all erring men the story ends not here. First there was a look turned upon Peter by his Master, Himself in the hands of His enemies; and in the story of the resurrection there is one little verse very pregnant with meaning to all those who have eyes and hearts to read between the lines. On the first day of the resurrection Christ appeared alone to Peter; only now we find, as so often in the life of the Son of Man, that what we have called tact is changed into something higher. It was not tact which led the Lord Jesus to manifest Himself to His erring Apostle, but that deep pity which Christ ever felt for the repentant sinner. The *thoughtfulness* of Christ made Him understand how to deal with His

rash Apostle; but it was the *love* of Christ which consecrated the first day of Resurrection by the forgiveness of the Simon who had belied so terribly the title of honour given to the Peter.

Both the anointings are excellent illustrations of the tact of the Lord Jesus. Take the pathetic story which St. Luke tells. The woman was a sinner, known and recognised as such. The last thing she would desire was to have attention called to her, or to her penitence. The Lord sits through the meal apparently unheedful. His feet are bathed in tears, and touched by kisses; they are swathed gently in the long tresses of luxuriant hair; they are refreshed by the soft emollient of the ointment. But He sits there still and impassive. He makes no sign. At last the meal is ended, and the right time has come. But even then the conversation is not directed to the woman. It is to His host that the word of Christ is addressed: "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee." Then followed one of those allegorical questions such as the Rabbis were accustomed to put before their scholars, and in which the Jews took special delight. Which would love most? The debtor, whose debt in his own eyes at least was small, and caused him

neither thought or anxiety, or the debtor, who knew that his debt was such as he could never pay, and which was a continual fear and burden to him? The Pharisee did not at first see the drift of Christ's interrogation; but the woman would understand. On her heart the words would fall as balm. Her debt was great and was a burden. She had sinned much; she longed to be forgiven; did she not love more than that proud man who sat there at the table scorning her in his contempt? Having thus, according to a custom He was often wont to pursue, prepared her mind to receive the precious gift of pardon, Christ, for the first time, turned to the woman. But not yet was His word spoken to her. It is still the Pharisee He addresses. This woman, whom he saw there, whom in his heart he had despised, was indeed a sinner. Yet what a contrast did her conduct afford to him, the man who had bidden Him to his house as his guest! No water had been ready for the soiled feet; no perfumed ointment had been prepared for the head; no kiss of salutation had been offered. The heart of the repentant sinner was whiter than the heart of the self-satisfied Pharisee who had so loftily sat in judgment over her. She loved much. Therefore her sins were forgiven. At

last He speaks to the penitent herself: "Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace."

The anointing by Mary at Bethany gave rise to a scene very similar. Only this time it was Christ's own disciples who were at fault. John is careful to point out that it was Judas, the thief, whose baneful influence carried away the others. The moment must have been a very painful one. Mary had come in her loving gratitude to render an act of homage to Him whom she revered as her great Master, and to offer her thanksgiving to the great Restorer who had given her brother back from the grave. There is even in her mind an unconscious echo of words she has heard uttered of some terrible doom which threatened Him, and this gives a consecration that she feels dimly to her action. It was such a pure act of love. And the very disciples, those who must know Him best, and can best understand His thoughts, misunderstand her offering. They call her deed a foolish waste, and hint at its being a very robbery of the poor. Christ, reading all the feelings of her heart, and sympathising in her disappointment, comes to her relief. As in the former instance He does not address Himself to her directly. Indeed from first to last He uttered no word to Mary. All was said to the disciples.

They are rebuked for their uncharitable surmises. Love to His person is put before any fancied benefits to the poor. While praise and thanks, such as we find nowhere else, is given to the woman whose loving act has thus proved her devotion, no word of direct praise or thanks is spoken to her. The attention was directed entirely to the disciples whose lack of appreciation he blamed, or to Himself to whom honour had been rendered: "Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon Me; for ye have the poor always with you; but Me ye have not always; for in that she poured this ointment upon My body, she did it to prepare Me for burial. Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which this woman hath done, shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." A little trait shows how strong was the influence which these words of the Master produced. St John, an old man living at Ephesus, was writing his gospel. He is describing the scene of the anointing at Bethany. His sympathies had not been with the traitor whom he stigmatises as the thief, nor with those who had been influenced by his plausible words. A recollection flashes across his mind. It is but a little thing; but it emphasises the

impression which the incident had printed on his memory. In the spirit of His Master's word he stays for a moment his narrative to record his remembrance that "the house was filled with the odour of the ointment."

It is not foreign to the spirit of this essay to notice the skill, which may almost be called tact, with which the Lord Jesus Christ foiled the designs of His adversaries during the last days of His sojourn in Jerusalem. Their purpose was fixed. Christ seemed to them so dangerous that nothing would content them but His death. No doubt there was envy and malice in their hearts, but there was also fear. The people were excitable; violence might take place at any moment; an insurrection, the only result of which would be new oppression on the part of the Romans, and new degradation for the Jewish nation, might occur any day. It was better that one man, rather than the whole nation, should perish. But there was danger for themselves. They feared the people. The event indeed proved that these rulers and scribes had exaggerated the attachment of the crowd to Christ. For the moment, however, they did not know how little real hold the Lord had on this fickle multitude, who, welcoming Him with Hosannas one day, were ready to shout "crucify

Him" the day after. So they feared the people. Hence they greatly desired to humiliate Him before the people. To this end three subtle questions were framed. The question as to His authority; the question concerning the resurrection; the question about tribute. In His answers He must, so it seemed to them, run counter to the prejudices of the people; or alienate powerful sects; or, what perhaps would be best of all, give occasion for an accusation before the governor of treason against the majesty of Rome. The skill with which the Lord Jesus foiled their designs is wonderful. Not only did He give them no handle for an accusation either before the popular conscience, or the Roman judgment seat; not only did He silence these adversaries so effectually that they dared not put another question; not only did He give them no handle against Himself; but each answer contained in itself a deep truth exactly suited to awaken repentance, contrition, and amendment in the hearts of these men, had repentance and amendment been possible to them. He foiled them the first time by an appeal to John the Baptist. He was dead; he had probably been dead some considerable time; but the people had not forgotten him and venerated his memory. These priests did not dare to disclaim his divine

authority for fear of being stoned. And the word of Christ had awakened another fear in them, faint and slight and to be too easily extinguished, a fear in their own conscience, that, after all, the baptism of John might have been from heaven and of God, and his denunciation of themselves a prophetic judgment. It is easy to see that the question concerning marriage in a future state of existence might have afforded a means of insinuating to an unthinking populace that the Lord Jesus Christ held low views on the subject of morality. Such an idea would, it is true, have been utterly contrary and opposed to every word which Christ had ever uttered; but that would not have been of much consequence with an unreasoning and excitable multitude. The answer of Christ is remarkable, not only because it defeats His questioners' object, but because it is an absolute revelation. He affirms it to be an error to suppose that the forms and relationships of the present sensible life, in their physical connection, would be transferred to the future spiritual state. He then proceeds, as in the former case, to teach the Sadducees a lesson. Quoting from Exodus, a book whose authority they acknowledged, He shows that God could not be styled the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, if those

patriarchs had perished, for "He is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Well may the Evangelist add that "when the multitude heard it, they were astonished at His teaching." But the question concerning tribute was the most captious of all. We know how the Jews hated the Roman tax-gatherers. They were a constant reminder of their country's degradation, and they affected them in their material interests. Thus the two most potent factors in the Jewish mind were enlisted against them—their patriotism, which was but another name for their religious fervour, and their love of money. No wonder that they classed the publicans with sinners and harlots in their detestation. Of this feeling the Pharisees, leagued with the Herodians, took advantage. Introducing their question with a sneering compliment about Christ's honesty of purpose, they inquired whether it was lawful to give tribute to Cæsar. He must be pierced, they felt sure, by one of the horns of this dilemma! To say "yes" meant ruin with the populace; to say "no" meant death as a traitor to the Roman authority. Our Lord did not answer the question; He made His enemies answer it themselves. "Show me the tribute money!" A Roman denarius was produced. "Whose image and superscription hath it?" We can almost

hear the pause which followed. What were they to answer? The coin was there, before their very faces, in full view of all who cared to see it. What were they to answer? Their own Rabbis had declared, "wherever any king's money is current there that king is lord." The currency of the denarius implied an acknowledgment of the dependence of Judea upon the Roman Empire, and involved all the obligations that flowed from such dependence. No evasion was possible. "Whose image and superscription hath it?" They answered, "Cæsar's." Then the Lord once again reminded them of their moral obligation: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's." They can only leave Him, marvelling.

Great tact—none the less because it was displayed in a different manner—was shown by Christ when He stood before Pilate. The Evangelists pourtray the character of Pilate in pretty clear outlines. A weak man, deficient in moral fibre, not daring to act for himself, but shifting hither and thither as varying opinions swayed him. Above all a coward, and, as cowards almost are, a cruel man. Our Lord's answers instinctively adapted themselves to this character. At first there was silence before the unjust judge, who,

caring little about the guilt or innocence of the prisoner, sought only to gain the suffrages of those who might do him an injury at Rome. But as Christ watched the internal struggle between an impulse to do right and a desire to avoid offending the chief priests, a pity, which in One who had been only human would have been contempt, overshadowed the mind of the Lord Jesus. So in answer to the question: "Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and power to release thee?" Christ spoke a word pregnant with a truth that Pilate had little heeded, and yet a word which would influence the governor strongly in his Captive's favour, and did in fact influence him to make an effort, such as it was, to obtain His release: "Thou couldest have no power at all against Me except it were given thee from above." Pilate, like most of the higher classes of the time, had no religion. Religion was a convenient weakness which influenced the common herd, and made them more amenable to government. But absence of religion by no means argues absence of superstition. One fear was rarely absence from the mind of a heathen—the fear of Nemesis. And so, as he listened to the word of the Captive standing impotent before him, there would arise

in the judge's mind a presentiment of fate. The deed he was about to do might be made to recoil on his own head. And while, as is evident from the narrative, some such thought was passing through the mind of Pilate, the Lord added another word which would bias him still more in his prisoner's favour: "Therefore he who hath delivered Me unto thee hath the greater sin." The word spoken in reply to Pilate's second question concerning the nature of His kingdom was as full of significance as the former answer. What was the truth to Pilate but an expression over which men who called themselves philosophers might wrangle; and what an enthusiast must this peasant from Galilee be, who, at such a moment, could speak of truth, and be content to die for it. What pity to crucify a man, full of noble thoughts, whose only fault was that by his foolish preaching He had aroused the malice and envy of priests and scribes, and rabbis, and pharisees, all of whom Pilate hated with a hatred born of fear. And, to look at the matter from a higher point of view, may we not think that these two words—the one reminding him that a higher power than that of the redoubtable Tiberias ruled over the world of men, the other making him perceive that there did exist somewhere in the universe truth for

which men could die—may we not with good reason think that these two words may have often crowded back upon Pilate's recollection, when the irony of events had proved to him that wrong-doing could not save him, and he sat in lonely exile by the blue waters of Helvetia's most lovely lake whose beauty, far from Rome and Rome's ambitions, had for him no charm?

The form in which the Evangelists present to us the Son of God is that of the Man Christ Jesus. He whom imagination pictures to the mind's gaze as we read is a Man. He wanders through the towns of Galilee, or passes through Samaria with His disciples, in outward form scarcely distinguishable from them. He preaches in Jerusalem, and the voice is human, and the accents such as we are familiar with. Children run fearlessly to meet Him, and nestle confidingly in His arms. He is faint with hunger; His throat is parched with thirst; He is wearied with fatigue; or, exhausted and worn out, He sleeps. His manner, His conversation, His speech, His gestures, are all those of man. Yet who can read any incident recorded in that wonderful life, I had almost said who can listen to any word uttered by His lips, without recognising that the history is not that of one of the sons of men.

Through every action the glory of the divine majesty flashes. He passes by, and lo! a blind man sees; He puts forth his hand, and lo! a sick man is healed; He touches the leper, and the touch has made him clean; He wakes from sleep, and the sea becomes calm in his presence; He meets a funeral procession, and pausing for a moment speaks a word, and lo! the dead revive. Truly might St. Mark call his Evangel the Gospel of the Son of God. The scenes on which our thoughts have been fixed in this essay have been considered especially as they had to do with Christ's human nature; the sayings we have been pondering are for the most part such as a man, very good and very wise, very kindly and with large insight, might perhaps have spoken; but the words written must have been poor and weak indeed, if, beyond the human picture, they have not brought conviction to the reader's heart, that He who thus spoke and acted was in very truth, "God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, of one essence with the Father."

XI.

THE MORAL STRENGTH OF CHRIST'S CHARACTER.

THERE is one quality which men are apt to lose sight of in summing up the mental characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ. The pity and tenderness of Christ's disposition are the most attractive parts of His nature; they appeal most to our sympathies; they call forth the quickest response to our own feelings; and thus there is a tendency to dwell on these to the exclusion of the sterner qualities of the Saviour. When we follow with the crowd in the wake of Jairus, whose little daughter Christ is about to restore to life; or when, mingling our tears with the tears of Jesus, we walk up the slopes of Bethany to the sepulchre of Lazarus; or when we stand and watch the funeral procession arrested by the words of pity uttered to the widowed mother who has lost her son,—all the best emotions of heart and imagina-

tion are stirred to their depths, and the scenes are impressed upon our memory with a sharp definiteness of outline which no time can weaken. Or to turn to the life of the Saviour Himself, and those events which affected Him personally. It is the pathetic incidents, and those marked by suffering or sorrow, which we most easily call to mind and most quickly remember. His hunger after long fasting in the wilderness, His thirst after the hot journey to the well of Sychar, His despair in the synagogue of Capernaum, the disappointment and rejection which led Him to teach in parables, the trouble of His soul at Jerusalem as the coming doom rose on His mental vision, the pathos of the Last Supper in the upper chamber, the agony of Gethsemane, the death-struggle at Golgotha—these are the things we think of when we would picture to ourselves the life of the Son of Man.

There is another side to this picture, if we care to see and recognise it. The strength of Christ is as conspicuous as any other quality in His character. A writer once attempted to show that Christ belonged to the type of humanity which is represented by St. John, rather than to that of which Elijah may be taken as the exponent. It was entirely a mistake. Men may, perhaps, be

roughly divided into two classes, one of which is characterised by strength, daring, and possibly a touch of brutality; the other of which is ruled rather by tenderness, gentleness, and thoughtfulness for others. The men who have done the work of the world, which is usually very rough work—the Cæsars, the Charlemagnes, the St. Pauls, the Luthers, the Napoleons—belong to the first class; the men who have taught the world to think, who have shown it the virtues of endurance and made it see the beauty of self-sacrifice—the St. Johns, the St. Francis d'Assisis, the Melancthons—represent the last. Possibly every one inclines to the one or the other of these types. But Christ, the perfect Man, the representative Man, belongs to no type, because He belongs to all, and unites in His own person every type. The Orphic hymn describes Jupiter—the Supreme God—as of no sex, but as enfolding in his personality both sexes, by which the poet intended to represent that the perfect man possessed all qualities, feminine and masculine alike. So Christ belonged to no type of man, but contained within Himself everything that was typical in man, possessing fully and completely all the strong and manly characteristics of the human race by which the world is made to serve, as well

as the softer and more loveable qualities which appeal to our affections.

The moral strength of Christ is shown pre-eminently in the ascendency He acquired over His disciples. He was their Master, wielding over them undisputed authority. We take this for granted, and look on it as a matter of course. It occasions no surprise in us; we do not discover in it any special mark of character. Christ is to us the Eternal Son, the Co-equal with the Father, very God of very God, and, therefore, His authority cannot be questioned or disputed. But this truth, so clear and indisputable to us, was not self-evident to the disciples. At first Christ was to them but a teacher, not differing very much from any other Rabbi; only by the slowest degrees would the fact of His Divine nature dawn upon their minds. Even if they were ready to acknowledge Him as Messiah, the Messiah was not, according to Jewish ideas, the co-equal with the Eternal God. The confession of Peter, noble as it was, did not imply to the apostles all that it implies to us, who possess the after-teaching which Peter had not then acquired. They saw the miracles; the miracles confirmed their faith, and they believed on Him; but the miracles did not carry to the mind of a Jew the same weight, or

even the same kind, of evidence, which, if we believe in their real occurrence, they bring to our intelligence. Miracles were wonders which might happen any day, and might be expected at any time; they were not the tremendous signs they must be to those who understand the permanency of the fixed laws of nature. The ascendency of Christ over His apostles was a moral ascendency. He gained it by strength of character, and He retained it by the same influence. The power of the ascendency may be measured by its completeness. Here were twelve men, differing in temperament, in disposition, in character; with varying hopes and diverse aspirations,—impulsive, lethargic, passionate, or sullen,—animated, indeed, by an ambition ruling alike in all, but nearly in each taking a somewhat different form; and these men all bent, with scarcely a dissenting murmur, to one will. Murmurs were heard now and then, but they were instantly suppressed. Sometimes by an appeal to the apostles' feelings. They hesitated to follow to the unknown but certain dangers of Jerusalem. Christ tells them that His presence is needed there; the opposition fades away in resignation: "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." Sometimes by a sharp rebuke. Led on by Judas, the dishonest bearer

of the common purse, they murmured at the waste of the ointment with which the Lord is anointed. "Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath done a good work on Me." Silence at once fell upon the fault-finders. The ascendency was not a matter of course. There were plenty of persons who did not yield to it. The sight of miracles did not produce it. Those who had actually eaten of the bread miraculously provided to save them from the faintness of hunger rejected Him the next day. The Jews who had seen the man born blind restored to sight were ready to stone Him immediately afterwards. The Scribes attributed the miracles He wrought to a league with the Evil One. It was not any external act which gained for Christ the power He exercised over His apostles; it was entirely moral strength—force and determination of will. They yielded themselves in subordination to a will-power stronger than their own. It was the same kind of power as that which made his associates give way before St. Paul, and induced the tenth legion to follow Cæsar, and gave Napoleon ascendency over the Directory, and unbounded influence over his Old Guard. We recognise it instantly in the men who have left their mark upon the world's history; but we do not recognise it so immediately in the case

of the Lord Jesus Christ, because in Him it was joined with other and opposite qualities, which Charlemagne, and Luther, and their compeers did not, and indeed could not, possess.

There are many incidents in the life of Christ which show that the manliness of Christ's character (if such a word may be applied to the Lord Jesus) was not neutralised or weakened by the softer and opposite qualities of pity, or humility, or self-forgetfulness.

Perhaps nothing marks so strikingly the strength of Christ's character as His calmness in sudden emergencies. It is not very difficult to encounter with undisturbed resolution events for which we are prepared; but nature asserts herself, and the real character is evidenced when we are suddenly, without warning, brought face to face with some unexpected danger or catastrophe. Such an event in the life of Christ was His awakening on the night of the storm. Wearied with long speaking, and with all the confusion attendant upon the crowding together of many persons, He had sought quiet and surcease in the boat of Peter. The evening was calm, and the throbbing water of the lake lapping idly against the boat had soothed the Saviour's tired nerves, and lulled Him into peaceful slumber. And then the scene had changed.

A storm had suddenly arisen, and the disciples, fearing for their lives, had awoke Him with the cry,—"Master, save us; we perish." What an awakening! yet the Christ is serene and tranquil as if all around Him had been still as when He started. In the quiet consciousness of power He arises, rebukes the wind, bids the waves be still, and there is calm.

As the fierce warring of the elements could not disturb the equanimity of Christ, so, somewhat similarly, the moral strength of the Lord Jesus is shown in the dauntlessness with which he could face and subdue angry crowds of men. We are impressed chiefly with the beauty of Christ's teaching, with its serene gentleness, with the attractive form in which He knew how to clothe His precepts, with the winning words by which He sought to gain the hearts and affections of men. But all our Lord's teaching was not of this gentle character. When the occasion called for it He could speak words of anger. He could rebuke vice with sternness; He could unmask hypocrisy with sharpness; He could put self-seeking to shame; He could expose formalism with scornful contempt; He could strip off the disguise from pretended sanctity, which hid itself beneath a garb of piety, with relentless severity. His outspoken words

gave offence. Now it would be an angry mob, which, mad with preaching which had wounded its pride, sought to dash Him headlong down from the steep rocks on which the city stood, as at Nazareth; or it would be disappointed zealots, whose carnal enthusiasm He had checked by placing before them the spiritual nature of Messiah's kingdom, who would reject Him with jeers and disdainful contempt, as at Capernaum; or the Jews of the Capitol, failing to grasp ideas which ran counter to their prejudices, would take up the stones, massed together for the building of the temple, in order to do to the death one whom they reviled as a blasphemer; or it would be the Scribes, or Pharisees, or Herodians, coming with honeyed words of insidious flattery, and putting to Him carefully-framed questions, by which they hoped to be able to deliver Him to the Governor as a traitor to the imperialism of Rome. But whatever the occasion might be, the calm strength of Christ never gave way. His presence of mind never failed Him. Unruffled and unmoved, in the security of mental power, He passes quietly through the surging masses, or withdraws Himself from the angry reproaches of the populace, or, eluding them, hides from His enemies, or, with matchless dexterity, turns the tables upon His adversaries

by skilful counter-question. We read these things in the Gospels, but we hardly realise the gravity of the situation. It does not strike us, that on each of these occasions the Lord Jesus was in danger of His life; and that He was saved, not by any forbearance on the part of the people, but by His own intrepidity, and by His own commanding power, which subdued and overawed His foes. As Elijah by his indomitable will triumphed over all the royal power of Ahab, so the Lord Jesus, by the strength of His moral nature, could pass scatheless and unhurt amid rampant crowds ready for any deed of blood.

There is one peculiarity about the courage of Christ—it was never aggressive. Peter, with the impulsive bravery common to every Galilean peasant, was ready at any moment to draw his sword, to strike first, and think afterwards. Paul would have made a skilful, watchful general, and yet would have been ready, had the occasion required it, to have shown a courage amounting to rashness, as did Napoleon at Arcola, or Ney at Waterloo. But the courage of Christ was not like this. It was not aggressive. It is impossible even to conceive of Christ as attacking. It was never impetuous, as was that of Peter; it could not have been calculatingly rash, as that of Paul

might have been. St. Peter possessed the courage of a trooper; St. Paul that of a general; Christ that of a martyr. Yet it was masculine quite as much as (in the old Greek sense) feminine. If the circumstance in which He was placed required it, He could endure with brave patience; again, if need were, the passive courage could become active. Of set purpose He could denounce in scathing terms the wrong-doer. But the strength of the Lord Jesus was always under restraint, He was never carried away by the impetuosity of feeling. We read in the Gospel of one striking instance of this power of self-control. There had come a time for speaking; and, in words such as rarely fell upon the ears of the cultivated and polite people by whom He was surrounded, Christ had pronounced woe after woe on their hypocrisy, venality, formalism, and self-satisfaction. Their anger was aroused; and partly from temper, partly in order to ensnare, they began to urge Him vehemently to say many things, and to speak unadvisedly. Then Christ is silent. He had pronounced His condemnation; it was not for Him to answer railing by counter-accusations.

The Gospel of St. John furnishes an illustration of the restrained courage of Christ. The story of the woman taken in adultery is undoubtedly a

true incident in the life of our Lord. It was not written by St. John, and does not form an authentic part of the Fourth Gospel. We know from St. Luke that there were many accounts of the doings and sayings of Christ current in the early Church. These were good as far as they went, and in their time served a useful purpose. They were superseded, because they were replaced by others of apostolic, or quasi-apostolic, authority. In these early narratives there was doubtless many a story, many a miracle, many a saying of the Lord recorded, which has been lost to us. Doubtless, too, in the early Church there was many an unwritten tradition handed down from one to the other, which had been told by those who had been eye and ear-witnesses of Christ's life upon earth. St. Paul has preserved one such traditionary saying in his speech to the elders of the Church of Ephesus. So, as I understand it, the story of what had happened in Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles had been preserved, and some one remembering the incident, and appreciating its pathetic beauty, wrote it in the margin of his copy of St. John's Gospel, in the place where it seemed to fit in with the context. From the margin it would easily, in succeeding copies, creep into the text. The incident itself is en-

tirely in accordance with our Lord's teaching, and with the general character of His actions; and—a thing important to remember—it is not a story which the first or subsequent ages of Christianity would have been the least likely to invent. Men have been quick to notice the subtle hostility of the accusers, and the shame which followed their discomfiture; they have remarked on the tact with which the Lord avoided giving a decision which must in any case have been fatal to His work; and they have dwelt much on the gentleness of Christ towards the sinful woman, and the grace with which He at once pardons her sin, and saves her from the power of her sinfulness. But I think they have overlooked the courage. It needed great moral courage to face in the way that Christ did the hostile band who were attacking Him in so covert a manner. Let any one imagine for himself the moral strength it must have required to keep silence in the face of the jeers, and taunts, and inuendoes, which we may be sure were flung at Him with an ever-increasing violence, as His adversaries began to despair of attaining their purpose. Nor must it be forgotten, that, although the terrible conviction of their own sinfulness might have had a salutary effect upon one or two, yet, when the first thought of awestruck

shame passed away, the feeling in the hearts of the greater number would be a most malignant hatred. Could any vengeance be too great for Him who had thus openly put them—the revered and honoured—to shame in the presence of the populace? Christ must have been fully aware that these men, who were already seeking His life, would never forgive Him their defeat. He must have known, that, in stooping down and keeping silence, He was forging the nails which should fasten Him to the Cross. Yet He did not flinch. The mode of procedure He had chosen was the right one, and therefore, with courageous heart, Christ pursued it.

So again with another incident in the life of Christ. The exquisite pathos of the story of the raising of Lazarus blinds our perception to everything in the narrative not immediately connected with the sorrow of the sisters, or Christ's deep affection for his friends. Its very beauty prevents our giving due heed to the smaller details, which nevertheless have so much to teach us. We hardly perceive the danger which Christ ran in venturing so close to Jerusalem, nor do we apprehend the courage of the deed He did. St. John, to whom small details are never unimportant, is careful to tell us that Christ had withdrawn to

Peræa, because the Jews sought His life. The astonishment of the disciples, when they heard of the proposition to return to Judæa, is an emphatic confirmation of the reality of the peril. And the gloomy speech, in which St. Thomas summed up the general resolution to follow their Master, and if necessary to die with Him, gives a vivid idea of the apprehension the faithful band entertained. Yet Christ does not hesitate for a moment. Duty called Him to Bethany, and so to Bethany He went. Under somewhat similar conditions Luther went to Worms. All the world recognises Luther's courage and resolution. But the tears of the Lord Jesus Christ, as He ascends the slope which led to Bethany, so engross our imagination and fill our hearts, that we have no mental capacity left to see, that, under this quiet act of love for those dear to Him, there lies concealed a courage and moral strength which may well call forth our highest admiration.

Although the courage of Christ was never aggressive, it was not merely passive. The circumstances which would call it into active operation were rare. His mission was not to strive, or cry, or lift up His voice, and His object on all occasions was to efface Himself in His mission. Christ sought to win men, not so much by oppos-

ing the evil as by holding up the good. Ever and again, when brought into contact with it, Christ showed that for Him evil and sin was the accursed thing with which no parley must be held, and which must not be condoned. But these occasions were the exceptions. We find, therefore, only an instance here and there in the life of Christ in which His courage took an active form. A Pharisee might be held up to shame; a sanctimonious ruler of the synagogue might be publicly rebuked for his hypocrisy; but the active courage of Christ showed itself principally in His willingness to meet death. It was not merely a willingness to die, if die He must, but a willingness to meet death. When Christ heard that Herod sought His life He abode calmly for three days still in Galilee. That was passive courage. But when the time appointed by the Father had come, Christ, of His own deliberate choice, went forth to face His doom. "He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem." This was active courage. He was in no danger. He was safe in Galilee or Peræa. If He had chosen to have avoided the capital, and to have remained in seclusion, no one would have interfered with Him. Even had the very worst happened, Syria, or Egypt, or Asia Minor, would have offered a perfectly safe retreat.

And Christ knew the danger. He knew it by His Divine knowledge. Supernatural consciousness was not indeed needed. There was plenty of indications, clear to the simplest comprehension, that the peril was no idle fear. Christ Himself had given evidence that He was well aware how real the danger was by His withdrawal from Judæa. The disciples, too, were well acquainted with the risk which they, as well as their Master, incurred. When the resolution was taken, and their steps bent in the direction of Judæa, "they followed" their Leader "trembling." And, as if to accentuate the determination, Christ enters Jerusalem publicly with pomp, surrounded by the multitude, with shoutings of hosannahs, with acclamations rending the air. The hour had come; so Christ threw down the gauntlet, and challenged His foes to the final strife, even though He knew that, judged as man judges, the result could have but one ending—His own ruin and destruction.

Almost the last act of Christ's earthly life was an act of courage. "Having loved His own, . . . He loved them unto the end." Perhaps it was at the cost of His own life that the Lord Jesus saved His apostles. The site of Gethsemane is unknown. We only know that it was one of the

many gardens which were to be found in the vicinity of Jerusalem. We cannot, therefore, judge accurately of the chances which it offered for escape. But we can hardly doubt that those chances were considerable. The night was in all probability moonlight; but from the configuration of the ground, there must have been many a spot in shadow, and capable of concealment. As the approaching band was one of considerable numbers, and carried torches, those in the garden would not be quite taken by surprise. It is impossible to think that there were not some chances, of which, had He so desired, Christ might have availed Himself. But He did not do so. Many reasons may have united together which influenced Him to allow Himself to be apprehended. The hour towards which all through His life He had been looking had come; the cup which the Father had given Him to drink was presented for His acceptance. But, while we recognise these motives, we must not overlook the plain narrative of St. John. Christ's first thought was for His disciples. Willing to give Himself up, He did not wish them to be involved in His arrest. So, very possibly passing to them a word to fly, He boldly fronts those who were approaching to take Him, and inquires what their object was, and whose

person they were desirous of securing? I do not think it is putting any strain upon the narrative to find in the questioning, and in the falling to the ground, an endeavour on the part of Christ to gain time, so that the disciples might have greater facility for escape. Upon the disciples themselves a kind of panic seems to have fallen, causing them to lose their self-possession, and leaving them helpless. Christ comes once more to their aid: "If therefore ye seek Me, let these go their way." And when the rash act of one apostle was likely to involve all in one common ruin, He condones the offence. He caused the deed of Peter to be passed over by stepping forward and healing the high priest's servant. Here, again, in the story of Gethsemane we are apt to lose sight of the lesser in the greater. The tragedy we witness is so tremendous, that we can but pass by the smaller details. The act of Christ is one not unmatched in human history. Others besides the Son of Man have had the grace and courage to act nobly, and to save their comrade by their own self-denying devotion. But although the deed is not without parallel in the annals of history, the manner in which Christ shielded His apostles, and preserved them from being led away captive with Himself on that fatal night, brings

out in bold relief the courage and moral strength which was one of the mental characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The great object of all who glory in the name of Christ should be to have a full knowledge of His character. Eternity itself, indeed, shall be all too short to gain a true and perfect conception of Him, whose dual nature is infinite as the everlasting Godhead. But a close study of His earthly life, as it has been revealed to us in the Gospels, will enable us to form an idea of that life, not altogether incomplete. And while we dwell long and lovingly on the side of the Lord Jesus Christ's character, which must have for all most attraction; while we linger with untold satisfaction over every incident, or miracle, or word, which reveals the mercy and love ever influencing the Saviour's heart; we should err if we omitted to note also the strength which lay beneath the gentleness, and the unflinching courage and determination which no fear could daunt. Perfect in the completeness of the manhood which He had adopted, the Lord Jesus Christ united in Himself every disposition and every quality wherewith, in the beginning, the nature of man had been endowed by God.

XII.

CHRIST'S NEED OF SYMPATHY.

In a former essay attention was drawn to the moral strength of Christ, and His consistent courage. The object of the present paper is to present the reverse side of Christ's character—its dependence, rather than its strength; or, using the words in their old Greek sense, we are to study the feminine, rather than the masculine side of the nature of the Lord Jesus. The perfect man must unite all qualities in himself. He must possess all the masculine characteristics, and all the feminine (feminine, not womanly) which are proper to man's whole nature. The Greeks thoroughly understood this division of qualities; and they understood, also, that it is only by their amalgamation in due proportion that the perfect man is formed. If the masculine qualities very largely predominate, the nature is apt to be brutal, savage, cruel, and inconsiderate for others; if the feminine qualities are too pronounced, the

character will be wanting in force of will and energy of purpose. To avoid misapprehension two men may be cited in which the feminine attributes of man were predominant. Both men are very famous; and, we may add, that in some directions both men were very strong. One is the most celebrated Father of Western Christianity; the other is nearly, if not quite, the greatest poet of the nineteenth century. The nature of both was feminine; but assuredly neither St. Augustine nor Lord Byron failed in decision of character, or in the strength of manliness.

It is matter for regret that the human character of the Lord Jesus Christ should not be more studied. Symptoms of a change, it is true, in this respect may be discerned; but men are still so exclusively occupied about the work of Christ, that they appear to have no time left to think about His person. Yet, however important the work of Christ may be, the person of Christ is not of less importance. The atonement itself is a dead letter, unless with the atonement we have the Divine personality which made the atonement possible, and the personal love without which the atonement cannot be savingly received. The living personal Saviour must draw men's hearts to Himself before they can be influenced by

any doctrine, however wholesome, or however necessary.

The best means of obtaining an insight into the heart of the Lord Jesus is to take a long clear gaze into one's own heart. The one illustrates the other; for both are human. It is from within that the key to the mind of Christ will be found. If in reading the sacred narrative of His life which is recorded in the Gospels, we can put ourselves to some extent into the position which He occupied; if we can note the feelings which under similar circumstances we ourselves should have experienced; if we will observe the motives which would have influenced our own conduct, and the impulses which would have acted upon our own wills; we may be able, in a measure, to comprehend the causes through which He acted, and to form some estimate of His character. Of course such an estimate will be at best rough and imperfect. First there will be in every one the absence, even in idea, of that perfect purity in thought and action which He possessed; and the estimate will vary very much according to the type of character to which the person making it belongs. The natural psychological character of each will instinctively seize upon the points in the character of Christ to which there is most

affinity. The sanguine temperament, which knows no fear, will esteem most highly those situations, as when Christ rebuked the Pharisees and Scribes, in which Christ stood face to face with His adversaries. The gentler disposition will dwell with most pleasure upon those scenes, as the raising of Lazarus, in which the tenderness of Christ is displayed. The unselfish will set most store by those incidents, as the self-forgetfulness of Christ in His conversation with the woman of Samaria, which appeal to their admiration of self-devotion. But, notwithstanding all drawbacks and all imperfections, each will gain some knowledge of the Saviour, and, on some point or other, be brought into closer contact and communion with Christ to their own infinite advantage.

The desire for sympathy is part of the human character. None are so completely independent of their fellow-men as to be indifferent to their opinion. Even the greatest cynic, who affects to disregard what may be said or thought of him, is not so careless as he seems. The Horatian motto,

> Populus me sibilat; at mihi plaudo
> Ipse domi,

is all very well; but had the singer been as

unscathed by the popular jeer, and as satisfied by the contemplation of his secret money-hoards as he pretended, he would not have taken the trouble to put his protest into verse. It was because no self-applause could deaden the sting of his unpopularity, that he vaunted his complacency at home. Even for the most hardened and the most cynical there are some from whom sympathy is sweet.

How ready Christ was to afford sympathy to others is evidenced in every line of the Gospels; and Christ Himself needed that sympathy which He gave so freely. It must have been so. Had Christ required no sympathy from those whom He trusted, and on whose love He could rely, how many would miss something necessary to themselves in that Divine life! There are very few who can altogether dispense with sympathy. Elijah tried to do so. In the day of his disappointment, when, deceived in his hope to win the people back again to Jehovah, he fled before the threat of Jezebel, this man—the very type of the strongest and most self-reliant—tried to rest upon himself. He failed. Alone in the anguish of his sorrow, and despair, and weariness, he prayed that he might die; and God's angels must give sympathy to the man who was too

proud and self-contained to seek it from his fellows. He tried and failed. God Himself taught him a better lesson. After that terrible experience his solitary life was to end. The first mission assigned to him was to consecrate Elisha to be his present companion, as well as his eventual successor.

The Lord Jesus Christ was no cynic, and in Him the need of sympathy was strong. Love and devotion indeed was given Him in no scanty measure. Few teachers have gathered round them a band of followers so thoroughly their own, and perhaps no one was ever personally regarded with stronger love than Christ. The deep affection of St. Peter, the entire devotion of St. John, the faithfulness of the somewhat sullen Thomas, and the honest loyalty of all, with one dark exception, must have been a constant and enduring source of comfort to the Saviour. On them He could always depend; upon them He could rely with absolute trust. These disciples loved their Master with their whole heart; but although they gave Him their sympathy to the utmost of their power, there was a limit beyond which they could not pass. Sympathy means more even than love. It means a love which understands. And these men, true and loyal as

they were, did not understand, and so Christ looked in vain from them for that complete sympathy for which He craved.

For this lack of understanding there was a cause. The Lord Jesus Christ had aims and purposes very different to those which influenced other men. Especially were His designs opposed to those ideas by which the great majority of His countrymen were animated. But the disciples, with scarcely an exception, were entirely possessed by the hopes and expectations of their nation. Politics—which to a Jew had but one meaning, the emancipation of their country from the hateful yoke of Rome—were never far from their minds, and gave a colour to all their thoughts. One at least of the apostles appears to have belonged to that fanatical party which had adopted the name of zealots. But Christ had no politics. Nothing was further from His thought than to meddle immediately with the existing social or civil order. The Kingdom He came to found was not of this world, and the realm in which He sought to rule was the hearts and consciences of men. We see, therefore, that it was impossible for the disciples to answer to the Lord's desire and need of sympathy, because they could not enter into the nature of His work,

or fathom the motives of His conduct. This misapprehension continued to the very last, and many an expression of the Lord Jesus shows how keenly He felt it.

They did not understand the nature of His work.

The idea of Christ as a Saviour never entered into their thoughts. That He taught a morality such as their Scribes had never conceived of, they understood; that He required a personal holiness beyond the demands of their law, they knew. The sense of their own sinfulness, as we see by the confession of St. Peter, weighed upon them. Yet they had no conception that the Master, whom they followed with so much reverence, was to make atonement for their sin, and for the sin of the whole world, by the offering of His life. Some of them had heard the words of their former Master, the great Baptist. They had stood and listened as He proclaimed: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." But the words had for them no meaning. Their thoughts did not go back to their own sacrifices, in order that in them they might see the type which this sacrificial Lamb of God was to fulfil. They had doubtless been often present at the presentation of the sin-offering in the Temple.

They had heard in trembling awe the priest, as, with his hand upon the victim's head, he transferred the guilt of the sinful man to the innocent animal. And they had seen the sacrifice completed by the death of the expiatory offering. But the words of the Baptist did not teach them to apply all this to the Christ whose footsteps they followed. And as they thought not of a Messiah whose office it was to make an expiation for the sin of the world, they never dreamed of a suffering Messiah. Quite other thoughts filled their minds. All their imagination was of the conquest of that Empire of Rome, which had blasted the greatness and destroyed the freedom of their nation. All their hope was the humiliation of that proud Power which had dared to enslave God's chosen people. All their desire was to be freed from the foreign yoke, which demanded tribute from them, and circulated in their midst the imperial coinage, the hateful badge of their degradation, and the visible mark of their servitude. In the all-embracing Kingdom which their Messiah was to establish upon the ruins of Rome, they were to hold the chief positions. They were to be its ministers and viziers, sitting around Him, on His right hand and on His left, in all the pomp and triumph of earthly dominion,

Such being the nature of their hopes, how could they understand the nature of the work He came to accomplish, or how could they give Him sympathy in its pursuit?

Nor did they understand any better the motive of His conduct.

Humility was not a Jewish virtue; and Christ describes Himself as meek and lowly in heart. Nor was this expression a mere phrase. Of this meekness and lowliness they had daily proof. His preaching was all of self-denial. His blessing was for the poor; His promise for the meek; His commendation for the humble-minded. And what He preached, He carried out in His own life. He was poor, oppressed, reviled; a very scorn of men; a mark for contumely and derision. And before all reproaches He was dumb; and in face of all insult He bowed in meekness. The cross, which He declared His followers were to carry, He bore Himself patiently before them. They were very true and very loyal, these disciples of His. They obeyed almost without a murmur. But this meekness, this want of staunch purpose, as it would seem to them, was very hard to bear. As time went on, and lengthened itself into months and years, and the goal they looked for seemed to be receding rather than getting nearer

to attainment, they grew impatient. There are little hints, slight indeed, but still hints, of such impatience. They did not care to go to Jerusalem; they murmured at Mary's waste of ointment at Bethany. The modern idea, that it was this impatience which led to the betrayal, has much to say for itself. If their Master would only declare Himself; if even He could be induced to declare Himself through outward pressure; if He could be constrained, by force of circumstances, to present Himself before rulers and people as the promised Messiah, who was to establish God's theocracy as an universal dominion throughout the world; then all would be well. And this impatience, based as it was on a complete misapprehension, while it culminated in the darkest crime on the part of one, may well have exercised a baneful influence on the minds of many. Judas was alone in his crime; but perhaps Judas was not alone in the thought which led to it. Their praise is that their love never failed. It remained true through all disappointments. It survived the death of their Master upon the cross, the burial of His body in the garden, and the destruction of all their hopes. But how little they understood the scope and purpose of His life is evident from the despairing words in which Cleopas sums

up their hopelessness and disappointment: "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel."

This want of comprehension was a bitter ingredient in the Saviour's daily cup of pain. There is abundant direct evidence that Christ needed, and looked for, sympathy from His disciples, and that the non-fulfilment of this expectation was a constant source of disappointment. He is continually breaking out into expressions which mark the bitterness of His feelings. They could not understand His teaching: "Know ye not this parable? how then shall ye know all parables?" They could not read His thoughts: "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" He asks, as the evening closed in, and a hungry multitude of men looked to Him for sustenance; and one answers, that two hundred pennyworth of bread was not sufficient that every one might have a little; and another inquires, almost in despair, of the five loaves and the two fishes, "what are they among so many?" They could not trust His power: He speaks a parable concerning the leaven of the Pharisees, and the leaven of Herod, and they whisper together that it is because they have taken no bread. Over and over again do we hear from Him the cry: "Are ye

yet without understanding?" "Do ye not understand?" "Why are ye so foolish?" On the road to the very cross they dispute among themselves who shall be greatest in the temporal kingdom they believed Him about to found; and at the final close, as they gathered round Him for the last time, questions, showing how utterly their comprehension of His person and His mission were at fault, break from their lips, and call down the sorrowful answer, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip?"

If there were no other indication of the small amount of sympathy which Christ obtained from His apostles, one consideration would bring the fact home to our minds. It is sufficiently obvious, that, if the two disciples, who were pre-eminent among the others, failed in this respect, Christ would not obtain full sympathy from the rest. If the warm-hearted Peter did not answer to his Lord's requirements, and if the beloved Apostle did not understand the mind of Christ, it may be taken as quite certain that Philip, or Thomas, or Judas, would not have a deeper insight.

St. Peter was at the head of the apostolic college. In all the lists which the Evangelists have handed down, his name stands the first.

He it was who ever put himself forward as the representative of his colleagues. He acted for the rest, and spoke for them. Yet Peter failed in comprehension. On one occasion his quick responsive answer had called down warm words of commendation from the Lord's mouth. Christ, as was His wont, had been questioning His followers, and the conversation had turned as to what people thought and said of Him. The opinions were as diverse as the characters and positions of the persons they represented. Then the Lord Jesus, turning to His chosen apostles, inquired what they thought concerning Him. Peter answers immediately, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." His display of faith was very grateful to the Lord: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven; and I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church." But the person of Christ could not be separated from the work of Christ. Whatever drew strongly the attention of the Lord Jesus to His position as the Son of God, scarcely ever failed to remind Him of the purpose for which He came, and the means by which that purpose was to be accomplished. He continued speaking. But a change

had come over His spirit. His tone is no longer one of triumph and exultation. He speaks no more of His power over Satan and the grave, and the impossibility of their prevailing. He sees before Him His own humiliation, the last journey to Jerusalem, the bitter hatred of the scribes and chief priests, the success of their deadly machinations, and His own painful death upon the cross. Peter's love is constant as ever; but his understanding is at fault. He fails to catch the central idea in the mind of Christ. He does not realise that the very death was the means whereby the triumph was to be gained. He sympathises with the lower feeling—the shrinking from the pain, the dread in the face of death; but he did not sympathise with the high purpose and the determined resolve. Sympathy for the suffering, as suffering, he feels; but sympathy for the suffering, as Christ's great and deliberately undertaken work by which man's redemption was to be achieved, and Christ's glorification manifested, he does not feel. "Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee." Instead of being strength-giving and fortifying, as sympathy ever should be, it was weakening in its effect. The severity of our Lord's answer shows the dissonance and want of harmony between the

Apostle's thought and His own: "Get thee behind Me, Satan; thou art an offence unto Me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

St. John, who drank most deeply of the loving spirit of his Master, did not understand that Master any better than did St. Peter. The love was true and deep, but it was not, like Christ's love, a love which could bear all things and believe all things. St. John was very far from comprehending a love which in its very nature was self-sacrificing. Even now, with all Christ's teaching unfolded before us, and the light of His example to guide us, I doubt if any human love would not be resentful for another. Under the influence of His Divine life, we may, perhaps, forgive the wrongs and injuries done to ourselves, but what man is there who does not resent the injury and wrong offered to the friend who is really dear to him? We have not many of St. John's words recorded in the Gospels. He was not, like St. Peter, the ready spokesman, ever giving voice to the opinions of his companions. I picture to myself St. John as silently contemplative, seeing and observing much, but making few comments on those things which he saw and heard. Of the few words preserved, two have a

direct bearing on the subject we are considering; and a third, not spoken indeed by the Apostle himself, but by his mother at the prompting of her sons, shows that St. John, equally with the other disciples, had formed an entire misconception of the object for which Christ came to earth.

St. John, like most very enthusiastic persons, was narrow in his ideas; and his bigotry was the cause of Christ's first reproof. He was not large-hearted enough to perceive that a man might be a true disciple, and yet not be an actual follower with him and his fellow-disciples. A man was casting out devils in the name of Christ. To St. John it seemed an unauthorised proceeding. Let him join their company; let him, like themselves, receive a distinct commission from their Lord; and then let him cast out devils. But in the meantime let him be forbidden, because he followed not with them. It was an error which might, at first sight, seem venial; but it was an error, the perpetuation of which in after times was to entail the awful sin of those terrible persecutions which have left the deepest stain upon Christ's Church. How far removed, then, was the Apostle's mind from the mind of Christ, and how out of sympathy with the perfect all-embracing love of the Divine Master! In sorrowful

patience the Lord points out to the offending disciple that he must not attempt to judge all men by his own procrustean standard. This large-hearted breadth of judgment is a difficult lesson to learn; and St. John, with all his faithful love, found it a very hard one to acquire. In after times, when, as we should think, he might have known more of the mind of the Lord Jesus, the same spirit of bigotry broke out again; for, according to a tradition which may very well be true, the Apostle by his harshness confirmed Cerinthus in his heresy, whereas, by showing a more meek and gentle bearing, he might, possibly, have converted the heresiarch to a better mind.

The second word of St. John shows a similar want of insight into his Master's spirit. How little did this son of thunder comprehend his Lord's humility, or the extent of His Divine forbearance! The Samaritans of a certain village refused to receive them because their faces were towards Jerusalem. St. John, as ever, was quick to take offence at the insult offered to His Lord. A far deeper pain than any that could have been caused by this rejection by the Samaritans must have come over the heart of Jesus, when He heard His own most favoured disciple demanding to be allowed to call down fire from heaven to

consume the offenders. And what an added intensity of pain must there have been for the Lord Jesus in the word with which St. John clenched his prayer: "As Elijah did." The example of the grand prophet, who more than any other represented that old dispensation of fear and retribution which Christ was to replace by His own blessed message of reconciliation and atonement, was not one to be quoted by a follower of the meek and lowly Nazarene. Later on Elijah himself had been taught, that, not by storm and earthquake, not by fire that destroys, not by man's anger that worketh wrath, but by love which forbears and heals, men's souls were to be won. All this St. John was to learn. But in the meantime what sorrow must have been in the heart of Christ, as He made the sad discovery that even St. John, the most beloved, could understand so little the mission of Him who came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them.

The third word, however, must have been the most painful of all. More even than the other two it showed want of sympathy with the mind of Christ on the part of those brought nearest to Him. The Lord Jesus Christ had told His disciples quite plainly the object for which His journey to Jerusalem was undertaken. Not to cast down Rome's

dominion; not to erect a banner of victory for Israel; not to receive a kingdom for Himself. But to die! To suffer every possible humiliation and degradation; to put Himself at the mercy of His most cruel enemies; to be made a prisoner; to be buffeted, and mocked, and spitted on, and scourged, and at the last to stretch His arms upon the shameful cross! And this is the moment that St. John chooses to prefer the prayer of his ambition. With St. James he comes to Christ: "Grant unto us that we may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left hand, in Thy glory." The answer is almost a sob: "Ye know not what ye ask." Truly they did not know. What their Master had that they should share. From His cup they should drink; with His baptism they should be baptized. In the case of one it was a martyrdom by death; in the case of the other a martyrdom by a life of witness. The reward should come afterwards.

The continuity of character is a distinctly marked feature in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ after His resurrection. But in the case of the mental characteristic we are considering the continuity is broken. Sympathy marks dependence; and there could be no dependence upon any human being

after Christ rose from the dead. The (sinless) weakness of human nature belonged only to the human life of Christ. It is true, that, after His resurrection and ascension, the risen and ascended Lord still remained the Son of Man; but as in His mortal life He remained sinless, so from His life in heaven fell away all those weaknesses and imperfections which are inseparable from the present nature of man. The essential characteristics remained. Christ's love underwent no diminution; and His desire for the love of those whom He had redeemed and saved, to speak anthropomorphically, knew no change. Pity, tenderness, compassion, sympathy for us, still remain. But the qualities which belong exclusively to earth disappear. The lowliness of Christ, His humility, His meekness and submissiveness—these things could not form part of that exalted nature to which all things in heaven and earth are to be subject; and with these, the dependence on others, without which sympathy cannot be, must of necessity vanish. The King of kings and Lord of lords, before whom angels veil their faces, gives sympathy to His creatures; from them He receives homage and adoration, glory, and praise, and dominion, for ever.

XIII.

GETHSEMANE AND THE PASSION AS A STUDY OF CHARACTER.

The life of the Lord Jesus Christ differs from all other biographies in the simplicity and directness with which it is narrated. It is the act of Christ, His saying, His word, His deed, which is told. And it is told without comment. The opinion of the biographer is never paraded, nor are his surmises stated. If this be true of the life as a whole, it is doubly true of its last hours. All four Evangelists relate the incidents attending the Lord's death; and they relate them with a minuteness we seek in vain in other portions of their memoirs. This is a great aid to the right apprehension of Christ's mental disposition, for, if character is specially manifested at a great crisis of a man's life, under no circumstances is a truer insight into the character of the Lord Jesus Christ likely to be obtained, than by a study of those scenes which culminate in Gethsemane and the Passion.

Accordingly we find that at Gethsemane, and at Calvary, certain mental qualities are brought into strong relief; the qualities, as might be expected, being those which were marked features in Christ's life.

The exact site of the garden of Gethsemane is unknown. Jerusalem was a walled city with a large population, and consequently the space within the enclosures of its ramparts was exceedingly circumscribed. There was no room for gardens. The richer citizens, therefore, hired or purchased ground outside the walls, and in the immediate vicinity of the city were many gardens and pleasure resorts. The proprietor of one of these gardens allowed the Lord Jesus to make use of it during His not unfrequent sojourns in the capital; and it was to this garden that Christ, as St. Luke notes, was wont to resort with His disciples, when He sought rest and quiet from the distracting turmoil of the city crowds, or when he would feign hold communion with His Father. One or two topographical indications are furnished by St. Luke and St. John. The garden was at the foot of the Mount of Olives, on the east side of the city, for Christ and His disciples had to descend into the valley, and pass over the brook Kedron, in order to reach

it. It is also implied that the distance from Jerusalem was not great. Its name, Gethsemane, mentioned by St. Matthew and St. Mark, implies that it was a shrubbery, enclosed and surrounded by trees and festooned by vines, rather than what we should now call a garden. It lay in the valley; and the steep hills, which surrounded Jerusalem on that side, closed and hemmed it in so that, whether in the sunlight or the moonlight, strong projecting shadows would be thrown, leaving many dark sombre spots where the light would not penetrate. On this account, probably, was it that the soldiers sent to apprehend the Lord Jesus did not trust to the light of the nearly full moon, but carried with them lanterns and torches. These would be necessary to search out those places which lay in the darkness caused by the overshadowing cliffs. It would also appear from the narrative, that the three apostles, Peter, James, and John, chosen to watch with Christ, lay in the shadow, while our Lord Himself was in the full moonlight, so that every movement and gesture could be observed. It is further implied, that the three chosen apostles were the only actual witnesses of our Lord's agony; the other eight (Judas was not with them) were at some little distance, and neither saw nor heard.

The circumstances accompanying the conflict of Christ in Gethsemane are quite different from those which were present at Calvary. The agony in the garden was the anticipatory hour. This is not unfrequently far more dreadful than the reality itself. The mind has strange power of presenting to itself by anticipation the suffering which has to be endured on the morrow. And the imagination absorbs all the faculties. When the suffering is actually endured, other things are present with it and help to absorb the attention. The crowd of witnessing onlookers; the knowledge that the eyes of all the attendant multitude are fixed upon the sufferer; the feeling that every gesture is noted, and every action observed; these things are not without their salutary and bracing influence. The nervous power is strung to the very utmost; even the coward feels some desire to play the man, and to show fortitude. But in the anticipation these motives for endurance are wanting, and, unsustained by any external help, the mind gives way to its worst fears.

This explains, in part, the difference of attitude shown by our Lord during the agony, and in the passion. In Gethsemane He was alone; or He had with Him only those who were tried friends. Before them there was no concealment.

Other circumstances there were at Gethsemane to render the suffering which Christ endured most terrible. Death was to Him infinitely more appalling than it ever could be to any other descendant of Adam. He was sinless; death was the curse entailed by sin. His horror in view of death was an unspeakable horror in the face of the sin which it represented. He was made sin, or, as the Revised Version has it, a sin-offering for us; and, although we have no sympathy with the older theology, represented by St. Anselm, which would make the Lord Jesus Christ actually bear the Father's curse, yet, in submitting Himself to death, sin, as the accursed thing which the Father could not tolerate, was brought very near to the spotless soul of the Lamb of God. Here, we think, is to be found the key to explain the awful horror which overwhelmed the Lord Jesus Christ. The loathing felt by the All-sinless in sin's presence prostrated Him in an agony to the earth, and caused His sweat (if the reading be correct) to be as great drops of blood falling down to the ground. It was the hour of the power of darkness.

Only we must not forget it was an agony of prayer. The prayer, and the submission to the Father's will, both prove that the union ever existing between the Father and the Son remained

unbroken. To this fact we must hold fast. Christ was ever the Beloved Son in whom the Father was well pleased. This is seen in the very words of the prayer which burst forth from the heart of the horror-stricken Christ; it is seen again (if we receive verse 43) in the Angel, the messenger of the Father's love, which strengthened Him in His conflict with the powers of evil; and it is seen once more in the serene confidence which declared that, were He but to breathe it, a prayer would bring legions of angels to scatter and annihilate His foes.

To turn to the special mental qualities which characterise the agony in Gethsemane.

First we may notice the calm self-possession which was ever a marked characteristic of the Saviour's mind. The agony itself was overwhelming. Yet just before our Lord had uttered a prayer which is unique in the world for its passionless sublimity. In the very midst of the agony, when Christ returns once and again to the three disciples whom He had chosen to be His witnesses, the words He speaks are composed as those spoken in the upper chamber. And when the High-Priestly guard came to arrest Him, He goes forth to meet His captors with a quiet confidence which shows no trace of the previous agitation.

The thoughtfulness of the Lord Jesus with regard to the safety of His disciples, and the care He took that they should not be implicated in His arrest, have been alluded to in a previous essay. The compassion and pity for others' pain, which through all the earlier pages of the Gospels had appealed to our sympathy, is shown once more, as Christ puts forth His hand to touch the wounded Malchus. Doubtless the Lord Jesus, like other men, acted from mixed motives. There may have been other reasons besides pity which led our Lord to heal the wounded servant of the High Priest. A desire to obtain favour in the eyes of His captors for the disciples no doubt exercised its influence; but the divine life must have been studied to little purpose, if we cannot recognise in this instance the same feeling of compassion as led to the calling of the blind man by the gate of Jericho, or the healing of the leper at the foot of the Mount of Beatitudes.

We must not fail to notice those mental qualities which specially mark the relationship of the Son to the Father. The perfect trust which enabled Him to resign Himself unconditionally into the Father's hands; the absolute submission which declined to use the powers He possessed for any purpose of His own; the filial piety

which carried the bitter cup into the Father's presence, and left the issue unreservedly with Him; nor should we pass over the human weakness which shrank from death, nor the human sensitiveness which dreaded the pain of crucifixion, even while determining to undergo it. Gethsemane is marked by weakness rather than by strength. In the garden we see the Son of Man prostrate, and for the moment almost unnerved; but underneath the weakness, and in despite of the nervous prostration, there lay a courage which never thought of yielding, and an endurance which knew no flinching.

But if weakness marks the agony in Gethsemane, the qualities of courage and endurance are conspicuous in the Passion. When the Lord Jesus came to die, the fortitude He showed compares with that of any martyr of whom we have the record. Only combined with the courage was a meekness which was all His own. Others have hurled defiance at their judges; others have marched on to death, dauntless indeed, but in a spirit of bravado. All such ostentation of courage was absent from the manner of the Lord Jesus Christ. He did not, as did St. Paul in after days, denounce the hypocritical sanctimoniousness of the High Priest, who condemned Him without

even the pretence of justice. When silence was most dignified, He stood before His accusers silent. When the time arrived to bear witness for the truth, He spoke boldly, even though He knew full well that His words would be turned into an accusation of blasphemy. The same characteristic calmness pervades His demeanour when He stands in the presence of Pilate. To the false and slanderous accusations of His enemies He opposes only silence; but when the Roman judge, half in pity to the prisoner, half in pity to himself, condescends to plead the difficult situation in which he found himself placed, the Lord, extenuating in some degree the lesser guilt of the heathen governor, speaks words of warning, which in after days shall recur with terrible force to the memory of Pilate.

"A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench," were words, borrowed from the prophet, which Christ had quoted as exemplifying His own conduct. And the words were true to the last. He is arraigned before His judges, whose only object was to find some plausible reason for condemning Him. Suddenly, from the lower end of the hall, where the servants and men-in-waiting were gathered, comes to His ears the voice of Peter. It is loud

with oaths and imprecations, and it is declaring that he, Peter, had never known the Master in whose footsteps he had followed so long and faithfully. What a pang must have shot through the heart of the Lord Jesus, as He heard His apostle's denial! For the moment the pain of His own cruel situation is forgotten in the greater pain caused by the base weakness of Simon Peter. But the pain is forgotten in the sorrow; and the sorrow itself is lost in pity for the erring man. The Lord, records the evangelist, turned and looked upon Peter. Not resentment, nor indignation, nor anger, were in the look the Lord turned upon His offending apostle. It was a look of reproachful forgiveness. With that look haunting him, well might St. Peter go forth into the night weeping bitterly. But the thoughtfulness and forgiving kindness of the Lord Jesus did not end in the Judgment-hall of Caiaphas. If we may judge by the after history, the knowledge of the bitter sorrow His disciple was undergoing must have been present with Christ through His own long agony of passion. It was on the very day of His resurrection that the Lord Jesus appeared to Simon Peter, to give him the assurance of forgiveness.

The self-forgetfulness and consideration for

others, which were leading traits in the life of Christ, appear in clear relief in the hours of His death. Pitiful women wept for His sad fate, and lamented, as they saw Him toiling up the steep towards Calvary. But the pity of Christ was not for Himself, but for them. In mournful pain, far removed from any spirit of exultation, He saw, in His prophetic gaze, the terrible punishment which, ere that generation had passed away, should fall upon those who had condemned Him. And seeing this, a mighty pity swept across His heart: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children; for, behold the days are coming, in which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the breasts that never gave suck."

In the early days of His ministry Christ had preached the forgiveness of injuries. He had taught that men were to love their enemies, to bless them that cursed them, to pray for them which despitefully used them. The words were wonderful. Strange indeed they sounded in the ears of Jews, whose God-given law enjoined love for one's friend, and hatred for one's enemy. Stranger still, if possible, they would have sounded to any heathen, who might by chance have been

in the motley assembly gathered round the Christ. But to say such words, sitting at ease upon the Mount of Beatitudes, was one thing; to carry the words into practice hanging from the cruel cross, with the pitiless nails rending the tender flesh, was quite another. Would the great Teacher be true to the sublime maxims which He had inculcated among the Galilean hills? The answer was given in no uncertain tones. Christ hangs upon the cross; His lacerated hands and feet are quivering with pain; fever-thirst consumes Him; around Him are seething crowds, jeering and mocking; His former deeds of goodness are paraded to add bitterness to the scorn which is hurled against Him; elders, and scribes, and priestly dignitaries, do not think it unworthy of their self-respect to gloat over the victim whom they have hounded to the death, and join with the populace in their derision. Then words were spoken which had never before been heard on earth. Above the storm of scorn and insult, the voice of the Lord Jesus rang clear and distinct: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

A myth has formed itself around the last scenes of Christ's life. The myth shows how men's thoughts concerning Christ differed from the

thought of Christ Himself. Human nature could not rest in the perfect purity of Christ's mind. Men felt indignant at the malice of Christ's enemies, and became angry at their apparent freedom from all retributive justice. The divine forgiveness, though spoken by the lips of Christ Himself, did not satisfy the desire for poetic justice. So they determined that at least one victim should be found. Half way along the Via Dolorosa, so runs the legend, was the workshop of a shoemaker, with a bench beside it. Here the Lord, exhausted by His sufferings, craved a few moments' rest. The hard soldiers were not unwilling to grant His request; even the rude mob felt inclined to respect His pain, and to cease awhile from their cruel taunts. But the owner of the workshop had no gleam of pity in his heart. He drove the unoffending Christ from the rough seat with blows and reproaches. So much may be history. But the myth has added a word singularly out of keeping with the demeanour of the meek and lowly Jesus on that day of humiliation: "Thou hast denied Me rest," Christ is reputed to have said; "from this time thou shalt know no rest, no, not even in the tomb, until I come again to judgment." And the man, adds the legend, went forth, branded as a

second Cain—the wandering Jew—doomed unceasingly to wander till the judgment-day.

Christ was the Son of Man with power on earth to forgive sins. "Thy sins be forgiven thee," were the words addressed to the paralytic man, whom his neighbours had brought in order that he might obtain bodily healing. It was Christ's special mission to forgive sins. The object for which He came to earth was to bear the sin of the world; and the very name by which He was called pointed to His office. His name was called Jesus, because He was to save His people from their sins. And this object had never been lost sight of. Every act of healing was but a type of the soul-healing it represented. "Thy sins be forgiven thee," was pronounced over one sick man; it was implied in the case of every sick man whose body the Lord restored to health. And so Christ's last hour is consecrated by an act of forgiveness. Two malefactors, less fortunate than the popular hero, Barabbas, had been condemned to death, and suffered at the same time as Christ. Both, in order to gain the sympathy of the mob, or possibly, at least in the case of one, out of sheer hatred of the good, had joined in the abuse showered upon the head of Christ, and had reviled their fellow-sufferer. But the Lord's

patience and forbearance, and the wonderful prayer for His persecutors, awakened better thoughts in the least hardened of these malefactors. His past life rose before him. He suffered; but he suffered, he is constrained to own, justly, for he received the reward of his doings. He listens to the taunts and jeering sarcasms; but they have for him a meaning very different from the intention of those who uttered them. The conviction arises in his mind: "This man hath done nothing amiss." Perhaps he had been in Galilee, and reports, little heeded at the time, come to his memory of what this dying man had done and said. Or in Jerusalem itself he might have heard, carelessly enough at the time, how his fellow-sufferer had made a blind man to see, or even had called the dead back to life. It was not a likely place to call forth faith. And yet faith did arise in the man's heart. The disdainful words of the priests who mocked were, after all, true, and he recognised their truth. This man, dying a felon's death upon the cross, was, in very truth, the Christ, the King of Israel. So from his cross of shame and agony, he turns to that other cross, on which He, whom he acknowledges as the Messiah, is hanging: "Lord, remember me, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." And

the dying Christ gathers home the first-fruits of that innumerable multitude whom His sufferings and death shall save: "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

The episode, in which Christ gives His mother into the charge of St. John, is one of the most beautiful incidents in the Passion. Mary had not been all that a mother might have been to such a Son. She had not understood; and not understanding, she had let a certain estrangement grow up between her and the Lord Jesus Christ. She had suffered herself to be influenced by the unworthy suggestions of her other children, whose jealousy and dislike of their elder brother was no secret. But the cross had revived the love which lay latent in the mother's breast. The disciples, who had hitherto followed Him so faithfully, were, with one exception, absent; but the mother, who in the day of her Son's popularity had held herself aloof, is found in the day of His ignominy kneeling at the foot of His cross. And as Christ had ever forgotten His own pain, or His own discomfort, in ministering to the needs of others, so now, at the moment of His own direst pain, is the pain itself set aside, in order that His mother's future should be cared for. The best beloved of His apostles was there. He was able to give His

mother the protection and home she needed. To his charge, therefore, the Lord solemnly assigns her. In other days, in order to show that the ties of earthly relationship must be replaced by a spiritual consecration, Christ had avoided the use of the word mother in addressing Mary. But now everything else is forgotten in the love and sympathy of this last farewell. He turns to the weeping Mary: "Mother, behold thy son." Then He speaks to St. John: "Behold thy mother."

An older school of theology has read in the word pressed from Christ as the agony of death overshadowed Him, the Father's desertion of the Son. Those who are inclined to accept this view can have studied their Psalms to little purpose; were they to consider their own feelings, or to mark their own prayers, when any great or overwhelming sorrow comes into their life, they would learn to understand better. Has not the word of Christ found an echo in the heart of every sufferer, since it was first uttered by the Psalmist, and repeated upon the cross? Is it not in the very nature of all intense suffering to raise a cloud between the soul and God?—a law of suffering from which the Son of Man was not excepted. "My God, my God, why hast Thou

forsaken Me?" is parallel to the soul's outcry of St. Paul, "I am the chief of sinners." It does not imply an actual desertion by God. It was simply the experience of human suffering, as St. Paul's exclamation was the expression of human sin. To the sin the sinless Christ was a stranger; but the cup of human suffering the Man of sorrows drained to the dregs. The word of Christ does not show that He was forsaken by the Father; it points only to the intensity of the Lord's pain. Every word and act in Gethsemane, and every incident in the Passion, prove that the perfect confidence ever existing between the Father and the Son remained unbroken. As it had been preserved constant in life, so did it continue steadfast in death. If further assurance were needed, that assurance is found in the last word of Christ. In calm reliance Christ resigned Himself into the Father's keeping: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit."

Thus the character of the Lord Jesus Christ remained to the last consistent. What it had been in life, that it remained through death. The greatest trial which it is possible for man to undergo tried the Christ of God, and He passed through it triumphantly. His patience,

His gentleness, His meekness under insult, His forgiveness of despiteful injuries; His calmness in danger, His self-possession in the presence of His enemies, His endurance, His single-minded undauntedness and lofty courage, His flashes of sorrowful anger in face of cowardice and meanness; His self-forgetfulness, His consideration, His care and thoughtfulness for others, His yearning to do good to the bodies and souls of men, His desire to pardon and forgive the sinful; His entire trust in God, His absolute resignation to the Father's will, His perfect submission to the Divine counsels;—all are exemplified as the terrible drama of Gethsemane and the Passion is enacted before us. In the Passion, more than elsewhere, we behold the Son of Man; in the Passion, more than elsewhere, we recognise the truth which even a heathen centurion dimly apprehended: "Truly this was the Son of God."

We have regarded the conflict in Gethsemane and the crucifixion at Calvary as they tended to throw light on the character of the Lord Jesus Christ. But who can let his thoughts dwell on that divine tragedy and not remember its personal significance to himself? Who can contemplate the sufferings which Jesus bore without feeling his heart stirred with love and devotion towards

the Saviour, who was content thus to suffer and to die, that at such a price He might win man's redemption? Who can look upon that sacrifice of divine love, and not re-echo the words of Graf Zinzendorf: "Thou hast done so much for me; but what have I done for Thee?"

XIV.

THE MANIFESTATIONS OF THE RISEN CHRIST.

The Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is a thing absolutely unique in the history of the world.

As the Resurrection is the central fact of Christianity, it is around it that controversy has raged most strongly. Friends and foes alike have discerned that the Christian religion, in any real sense, stands or falls as the truth of the Resurrection is accepted or rejected. Sceptics of the advanced school, as it is falsely called, put it at once aside as the most outrageous of all the legends which have gathered round the name of Jesus of Nazareth. As it is allowed on all sides, that, if it be a fact, it is a miraculous fact, the large school of modern thought which denies the possibility of miracles is bound to deny it; that is to say, is bound to deny it in any orthodox sense. Thus the Resurrection is regarded as a

fraud, though very few remain who persist in taking this view; or as a legend, the invention of which arose gradually and in all good faith; or as an hallucination, which is to be explained much in the same way as that in which mesmerism and its many offshoots is accounted for. This last view specially commends itself to those who, while disbelieving the physical fact of the Resurrection, yet maintain the honesty and good faith of the apostles, and are willing to receive the history of Christ as narrated in the Gospels, and the history of the Church as narrated in the Acts, as substantially true. It also commends itself to another large class of persons, namely, those who deny the fact of the bodily resurrection, because their theory obliges them to discredit the miracle. The number of such persons is unhappily largely on the increase. They are Christians; they believe in Christ, and they believe in Christ's religion; but they regard every miraculous incident narrated as either legendary, or a later addition. And so they persuade themselves, as did Hymenæus and Philetus of old, that the Resurrection was purely spiritual—a revival of the Spirit of Christ in the hearts of His disciples.

But these controversies and theories lie altogether outside the scope of this present paper.

It is not our object to prove the fact of the Resurrection, but, assuming its truth, to study the lesson it teaches, especially as it bears upon the nature and mental characteristics of the Saviour. In the same manner it does not enter into our purpose to discuss the authenticity or genuineness of the records. A particular passage may have been added by a later hand to supply the omission of a lost page, or a doubt may be entertained concerning the tradition which identifies John the Divine with the son of Zebedee; but notwithstanding the keen endeavours of a destructive criticism to demonstrate the untrustworthiness of the books on which we rely, the most recent inquiry tends to confirm the authorship of the New Testament writings, and to acknowledge that even the Fourth Gospel, as M. Rénan allows, is the work of the apostle whose name it bears. All unwittingly as unintentionally Bauer, and the author of "Supernatural Religion," have, in the end, done good service to the truth they attacked so bitterly.

The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is a thing absolutely unique in the history of the world. There had been revivals. Once and again the dead had been brought back to life. The Old Testament prophets had constrained the

soul to re-enter the body it had for a time quitted. The Lord Jesus had Himself recalled the life which had departed. But, as has often been pointed out, there is no analogy between these reanimations and the Resurrection of Christ. The resuscitated child, the raised girl, the reanimated man, were still subject to death, and eventually became death's prey. Over the Risen Lord death had no more dominion. In that He died, He died unto sin once: in that He lived, He lived unto God. In His case the curse was arrested, because the thing which caused the curse was destroyed. The Resurrection of Christ was the resurrection of Man to the life eternal. In Adam all had died; in Christ all were made alive.

Many difficult questions suggest themselves with regard to the body of the Risen Christ. These questions gather round them a deep interest, because the body, wherewith the Lord was clothed at the Resurrection, is the exemplar and pattern of the body which shall pertain to His saints at their resurrection.

First we may note that it was the same body. In the case of Christ it was absolutely the same body—the same actual body which had been laid in the sepulchre. It is true that in three out of the ten appearances of Christ after the Resurrec-

tion the recognition was not immediate; but the cause of the failure of recognition lay in the persons beholding, not in the body itself. In the case of the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, we are expressly told that "their eyes were holden" that they should not know Him; when Christ appeared to the disciples as they were fishing in the Lake of Galilee, it was the half darkness of the early dawn that prevented them from recognising the indistinct form; and with regard to Mary Magdalene mistaking her Lord for the gardener, not only was her mind preoccupied, but, as has been said very beautifully, the falling tears wove a veil before her eyes so that she could not see. But the body was unmistakably the same. It bore the marks of Christ's recent sufferings. The appeal to the doubting Thomas was the scar left by the cruel nails and the wound inflicted by the trooper's spear. The manner was the same. He was known to the disciples at Emmaus, when, according to His wont, He took into His hands the bread and broke it. The voice was the same. Mary Magdalene, too absorbed by her sorrow to notice the appearance of a stranger, knew instantly the voice which called her by her name. The general aspect was the same. When the first feeling of

fear and astonishment had subsided, the disciples, gathered together on that eventful Sunday night, had no difficulty in recognising Him, whom, despite the closed doors, they saw standing in their midst, as their Master.

It was the same body, and yet it was not the same body. It was the same body, but it was differently conditioned. The Lord Jesus Christ, being man, had conformed Himself even in His Resurrection to the laws which should regulate man. In the case of the Christ "it was sown a natural body, it was raised a spiritual body."

It has been finely observed, that, in our ignorance of matter, we cannot know how matter itself, and its laws, may be modified by the ruling of the spirit in the spiritual body. The resurrection-body, being a body, must be material; and the spectroscope has shown, that, so far as our knowledge extends, all matter throughout the universe is identically the same, and is composed of the same primitive elements, or, as men of science dream, of the same primitive element, as we find on our earth. But as it is supposed that the principles of mathematics, which are axiomatic so far as geometry of three dimensions are concerned, may have to be modified when we have to do with figures of four dimensions, so it has

been suggested that the ordinary laws of matter, such as that of gravitation, may be overruled by the higher spiritual nature of the resurrection-body. Man's present body is a psychical, or soulish body (σῶμα ψυχικὸν—"natural body"), that is to say, a body which he possesses in common with the lower animals, and is governed and regulated by the animal life; but the resurrection-body is a spiritual body (σῶμα πνευματικόν), that is, a body governed and regulated by the spiritual life. The distinction between soul and spirit must be accurately observed. The fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians should be carefully studied; and then it will be seen that the word soul, and its corresponding adjective, is not used, as persons very commonly use it erroneously in ordinary language, as the equivalent of man's immortal part, but simply as the animal life which man possesses in common with the rest of the animal creation. The word soul is always used in the New Testament in this sense of animal life. And curiously enough, there is no word in the New Testament which answers to our popular use of the word soul. The word "spirit" corresponds most nearly, but spirit, applied to man, is used, at all events by St. Paul, as the soul of man (in its popular sense)

informed by the Spirit of God. Another popular conception needs also be guarded against. The "glorified" body of the Resurrection is thought of as being aerial, fine like gossamer, attenuated and transparent, as the painters represent the bodies of angels. But there is nothing in Scripture to uphold such an idea. It does not describe man's earthly body as being heavy, gross, sluggish; nor, on the other hand, does it teach that the resurrection-body shall be light, quick, or imponderable. The "glory" may well be an inner glory; or rather the glory may be sometimes veiled, as when Christ appeared to Mary Magdalene, sometimes apparent, as in Christ's transfiguration. With regard to our Lord's body, it has been well pointed out that, although during His life on earth His body was a "natural" body, and after the Resurrection it was a "spiritual" body, yet in His case the body during the life of earth may have been so "plastic under the power of the Spirit," that the spiritual life may even then have asserted its influence, as it shall in us after the resurrection. In support of this view, the transfiguration, the slipping out of the hands of the mob of Nazareth, His sudden withdrawals from the crowds of Jerusalem when they threatened His life too soon, and especially

His walking on the sea of Galilee, are instanced. It is pointed out that this miracle of walking on the water appears to "occupy a position wholly peculiar to itself among the miracles of the Fourth Gospel;" that it is not called a sign; and that it is not introduced, as it is usually the case with St. John in narrating miracles, for the purpose of leading up to a discourse. It seems in the eyes of the Evangelist to be but a natural act on the part of Him, who was as much above, as within, the laws which regulate the lives and acts of ordinary men.

Anyway the body of the Risen Lord was not subject to the laws which govern the bodies of mortal men. It could penetrate through material obstacles. The closed doors presented no hindrance to the appearance of Christ in the midst of His disciples. It could make itself visible or invisible. The stranger on the way to Emmaus did not arrive, but was; the Lord did not come to the shore of the Lake, but stood there. So on the other hand it could become invisible. They were seated at the supper table in a room, doubtless with closed doors, when the Saviour, whom they had recognised, vanished out of their sight. All the appearances of our Lord partook of this suddenness. We are never told of any approach; no

departure is ever mentioned. He is there; He is there no longer. The resurrection-body of Christ was not bound by the ordinary laws of locomotion. It was bloodless. "A spirit," said our Lord to His affrighted disciples, "hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have;" but unless we suppose some further change to have taken place, presumably at the time of the Ascension, a difficulty meets us when we compare this word with the declaration of St. Paul, that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Another difficulty to a correct understanding of the nature of the resurrection-body is in the fact mentioned by St. Luke, that our Lord in the presence of His disciples ate a piece of a broiled fish and of an honeycomb. This is the only instance recorded in which our Lord ate after the Resurrection. It does not appear that Christ ever ate *with* the disciples after He left the tomb. He certainly did not do so at Emmaus; and the language of St. John, "Jesus cometh and taketh bread, and giveth them, and the fish likewise," would exclude the idea that Christ Himself partook of the food He had provided by the Lake of Tiberias. The older theory was that man, when clothed with the resurrection-body, should eat, and much was made of the text which says that "man did eat angels'

food;" and there is a certain difficulty in the Lord's saying at the last passover, that he would not "henceforth drink of the fruit of the vine," until that day when He should drink it new in the kingdom of God. Modern chemistry, with its explanation of food and the mode by which food nourishes, appears to make eating incompatible with a state in which corruption has no place. Lastly the spiritual body of the Resurrection was not subject to the law of gravitation. This is proved by the Ascension.

Perhaps a word may be said as to the clothing of the resurrection-body of Christ. It would appear that the clothing was docetic; that is to say, that the body appeared clothed, either according to the will of Christ, or in accordance with the nature of the appearance. The clothing was fitted to the occasion. Thus when our Lord appeared to Mary Magdalene in the garden, His dress was such as would be worn by the gardener. So we may suppose that on the other occasions on which Christ showed Himself, His dress must have been in keeping. Had there been anything marked or striking about the Lord's external appearance, St. John, who is careful to tell us that Christ's cloak was seamless, would hardly have failed to notice it. In the Apocalypse when the

Lord, after His Ascension, appeared to St. John the Divine, the character of the garments He wore is expressly noted. He appeared as the Priest of His Church, and the style of dress is taken from that worn by the High Priest of the Jews. The story of the transfiguration throws some light upon the matter. On that occasion the "spiritual" dominated the "natural;" and accordingly His attire took its form and appearance from the glory of the glorified body: "His raiment was white as the light." Similarly in the appearance to St. Paul, although no mention is made of the actual clothing, the glistening raiment may be understood: "There shone from heaven a great light round about me;" and again, "He saw a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun." The white raiment of the saints, spoken of in the Revelations, may have a similar origin.

If the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead clad in the same body, much more did He rise with the same mental attributes. These had undergone no change. The continuity between the life which He led on earth, and the new life which He took from the sepulchre, is preserved in all its integrity. All the qualities which characterised the Saviour as He taught in Galilee, or preached in Jerusalem, are found in the Risen

Lord. All the human qualities, which had endeared Him to His disciples, and had kept their love alive even when their hope had died, were there. All the human qualities which had attracted to His side the weary, the sorrowing, and the sinful, were there. And still more all that incommunicable grace and reserved power, which marked Him as the Son of God, were there. To comfort, to teach, to strengthen, and to forgive, are the proper work of the Risen Christ, as they had been the proper work of the Son of Man on earth. Only something of the same change to greater glory had come over His mind as had glorified His body. Not less love, not less tenderness; but a larger power, a greater majesty, a deeper awe.

This continuity of mental thought, with something of a diviner reverence superadded, is to be noticed in all the recorded appearances of which any details have been preserved. Omitting the appearances of the ascended Lord, there are in all ten occasions on which Christ showed Himself after His resurrection.

They are:—

Matt. xxviii. 1–10. The appearance to the women returning from the empty sepulchre.

John xx. 11–18. The appearance to Mary Magdalene in the garden.

Luke xxiv. 34. The appearance to Simon Peter on the day of Resurrection.

Luke xxiv. 13–34. The appearance to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

John xx. 19–23. The appearance to the disciples gathered together with closed door on the evening of the day of Resurrection.

John xx. 26–29. The second appearance on the eighth day to the assembled disciples, Thomas being with them.

John xxi. 1–23. The appearance to the disciples who had been fishing by the Lake of Galilee.

1 Cor. xv. 6, compared with Matt. xxviii. 16–20. The appearance on a mountain in Galilee to five hundred disciples.

1 Cor. xv. 7. The appearance to James, of which no details are given, and which is not mentioned in the Gospels.

Luke xxiv. 50–51 and Acts i. 4–9. The Ascension.

How the *first* word of the Risen Lord comes home to the hearts of His people. The prophet had foretold what the mission of the Messiah was

to be. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me . . . to comfort all who mourn." He has risen, and once more His first office is to comfort one who mourns. "Woman, why weepest thou?" How the thought goes back to a scene of the life which was closed, when, meeting another sorrowing woman, He had bidden her not to weep, and with his word of power had turned her tears to gladness. And yet while there is a whole volume of tender love in the one word when He calls Mary Magdalene by her name, an awe she had never felt before—an awe not repressing, but exalting her love—makes itself felt in her heart, as the "Touch me not" tells her that the old life of familiar intercourse was not to be resumed. Some similar feeling was in the mind of the other women whom He met returning from the sepulchre; and they, with a reverence they had not hitherto known, held Him by the feet and worshipped Him.

Again, how the former mind of the Saviour manifested itself in the appearance to St. Peter. It is but a little incidental verse, casually (as we say) introduced. "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon." It is not difficult to picture to the imagination what St. Peter's feelings must have been. The Lord whom he loved so

passionately was dead. And in spite of warnings, and in spite of his own protestations, the last act towards his Lord was the denial; and the last look of his Lord had been one of sorrow. But through His own pain Christ had noted the bitter tears which marked His apostle's repentance; and almost the first thought in the Lord's heart after His resurrection was how He might comfort His broken-hearted disciple, and assure him of forgiveness. St. Luke wrote his Gospel from information which he received from those who had been eye-witnesses of Christ's acts. May not the beautiful story of the woman who was a sinner, whom Christ forgave, have been told by this erring Peter; and may not the expression of Christ, "she loved much," have been preserved by this same Peter, who, notwithstanding his grievous fall, could appeal to Him who knew all hearts: "Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee"?

And once more. In the days of His sojourn upon earth He had quoted as the motto for His own conduct the Messianic words of the prophet: "A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench." After the Resurrection just such a case occurred. Thomas was a man of a dark, melancholy disposition, inclined to

take a gloomy view of things. An unhappy man, and one difficult to get on with, but possessing, as such natures often do, a dogged pertinacity of affection. In his miserable moroseness he had absented himself from the society of his fellow-disciples, and when they told him the joyful news of the Resurrection, he refused to believe it. In his sullen anger he expressed his unbelief in strong and unbecoming terms. But their report produced one good effect; Thomas no longer separated himself from his companions. Eight days passed by, and then the Lord appeared once more. He had known all the unbelief; He had heard all the hasty words; and as in former days when His disciples had erred, or had been foolish, Christ's anger had melted into sorrow, so now the Risen Saviour's words of rebuke ring with a tone of tender forbearance rather than of harshness: "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing."

The Teacher, drawing forth with infinite skill the thoughts, and doubts, and difficulties in the minds of His hearers, as in the beginning of His ministry He had drawn forth the latent doubt in the heart of Nathaniel, is seen on the way to Emmaus; the Master, by a symbolical sign point-

ing out the work which awaited His apostles, and their success, as on the occasion of their call He had instructed them by a similar miracle, is visible by the Lake of Galilee; the Lord, breathing upon them that they might receive the Holy Ghost, and thus giving the earnest of the fulfilment of the promise He had spoken just before the humiliation of His betrayal, is before us as He stands in the midst of His disciples. Concerning His appearance to James no details are given, nor are there any special circumstances narrated with reference to Christ's showing Himself to the five hundred brethren of whom St. Paul makes mention. But enough is recorded to teach us plainly that the Risen Lord and Saviour is the same Lord and Saviour as died. Enough is said to make our hearts sure that He is as pitiful, as loving, as compassionate, as ready to receive, to pardon, and to bless, as the Lord and Saviour whose footsteps we followed as He walked by the shores of the Lake of Galilee, or to whose teaching we hearkened reverently as He delivered His sermon from the Mount of Beatitudes.

XV.

THE APPEARANCES OF THE ASCENDED LORD.

In studying the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, one circumstance is calculated to make a striking impression upon the mind, viz., the manner in which our Lord performed His actions. The Lord constantly appealed to His works as a proof of His Divine mission. "Believe Me," He said to the Jews who were cavilling at Him, "for the very works' sake." Yet never were works done with greater simplicity. The mighty works which He did arose out of the accidental circumstances of His daily life. Never once did our Lord perform a miracle of which it can be said, that He wrought it for effect, and even directly as evidence of His power. When pressed by His adversaries to show a sign, He invariably refused. Christ's miracles were acts of kindness, or of pity, such as we might any day perform. The happy gladness of the marriage feast was likely to be over-clouded, because the stock of wine was failing, and the

Lord Jesus works His first miracle to prevent the disappointment. A wretched cripple is lying by the side of the health-giving spring, which through his infirmity he cannot reach, and Christ, moved with compassion, heals him. Multitudes are around Him, their provisions are expended; and the Lord, to save them from hunger, multiplies the loaves of bread. A blind man calls upon Him for help as he is passing onwards into Jericho, and a gracious word of the Saviour sends him to his home restored to sight.

After His resurrection Christ acts in the same manner. Sceptics have asked scornfully, why did Christ only show Himself to His friends? why did He not at once shame and convict His enemies by appearing to them after he was risen from the dead? Such a mode of action would have been altogether foreign to the Lord's character. Had He done so, sceptics, far from being convinced, would have urged, as they might have done with reason, the want of mental continuity as an objection. But the Lord, after His resurrection, continued to act precisely in the same manner as before His passion. As His miracles were performed for the purpose of giving comfort and relief to the individuals who benefited by them, so the appearances were granted in order to

console, or strengthen, or bless His disciples. He manifested Himself to Peter in order that He might seal to him forgiveness for the denial. He showed Himself to Mary Magdalene in order that He might dry her tears. He penetrated through the closed doors into the chamber, where the disciples were assembled, in order that He might relieve them from the fear, and suspense, and sorrow, which filled their hearts. As there was no miracle which had not its object of mercy, so was there no appearance which had not its purpose of comfort. The Lord has risen, not only with the same body, not only bearing in His hands the imprints of the nails, not only carrying on His side the piercing of the spear; but animated with the same spirit, endued with the same mental disposition, possessed with the same feelings, endowed with the same emotions, marked by the same character.

And this same continuity of character is to be traced in the Lord after His ascension. The appearances did not cease after He had ascended to the right hand of the Majesty on high. At rare intervals He showed Himself to one or another of His servants. And these appearances had an individual character, and a personal significance. As the miracles were kindly actions,

and not irresistible signs of overwhelming power; as the appearances after the resurrection were missions of comfort to His disciples, and not convincing revelations to the world; so the manifestations after the ascension were visits of mercy to His servants, and not mighty displays of majesty to unbelievers. It was to His protomartyr St. Stephen that Christ revealed Himself, standing at the right hand of God to aid and succour the confessor who was content to suffer in his Master's cause. It was to the angry Saul, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against His Church, that the Lord showed Himself on the way to Damascus, that He might change the persecutor into the noble Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles. It was to His servant John, an exile in the isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ, that the Lord appeared, in order that in the glorious mysteries of the Apocalyptic vision, the pains of his banishment might be forgotten. In His life, in His resurrection, in His ascension, in His glory at the right hand of God, it is ever the same Saviour, bearing man's infirmities, carrying man's weaknesses, pitying man's sorrows, relieving man's ills; ever aiding, ever comforting, ever blessing.

Let us glance briefly at the history of Stephen. A Hellenistic Jew, upon the murmuring of the Grecian widows that they were neglected in the daily ministration, he was chosen one of the seven. He seems, as is not unfrequently the case, to have derived a new energy from a new sphere; or, possibly, his new office opened an opportunity of influence which before had been lacking. Holy Scripture, which rarely deals in superlatives, seems almost to fail in finding words to mark the importance of himself and of his work. He alone of all the seven is declared to be a man "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost;" a few verses further on he is described as being "full of faith and power;" his miracles and wonders were "great among the people;" the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake were "irresistible;" his very face was "as it had been the face of an angel." Nor was his character marked only by energy and power. He had drunk fully of Christ's spirit. The meekness of the Master was not wanting in His disciple; the gentleness of the Lord was not lacking in His servant; the first witness for Christ emulated his Lord's Divine spirit of forgiveness; the love which Christ displayed so conspicuously, shone forth brightly in His proto-martyr. Forgetful of his enemies' cruel

hatred, regardless of his own sharp pains, the dying Stephen kneeled down, and prayed for those who slew him: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

Stephen was the forerunner of St. Paul. In his speech before the council can be traced the germs of that teaching which St. Paul afterwards so nobly developed. While the apostles were still daily going up to the Temple to pray; while St. Peter was still scandalised at the mere idea that Gentiles could be anything but unclean; while the Church was ready to be thrown into a ferment, which an apostle could scarcely allay, because an uncircumcised man had been admitted to baptism; we find Stephen—as St. Paul later—denouncing Jewish local worship with the Jewish customs which belonged to it. At this time the apostles and the Christian community were clinging fast to Judaism and the ceremonial law. The holy land of Israel, the holy city of the Jews, above all the holy place of the Jewish Temple,—these things, with all the narrow bigoted religious notions which were inseparable from them, were adhered to by the disciples of Christ, as tenaciously and zealously as by the Jews themselves. They had no conception of an universal Church which should embrace in its large fold all nations

without distinction. Stephen was the first to grasp this wide truth. And for this truth he died. Almost as if to give sanction to this truth did the ascended Christ appear.

For it was to St. Stephen, dying under the hands of those to whom its enunciation was as blasphemy, that the Lord Jesus manifested Himself: "He being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and he said, Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God."

Our thoughts instinctively recur to the words which Christ had himself spoken only a short time back in the presence of this very council. When the High Priest had asked him, "I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God," the Lord had answered, "Thou hast said: hereafter shall the Son of Man sit on the right hand of the power of God." For the moment the Jewish rulers had had their way. The Son of God had bowed His head in meekness, and submitted Himself to their passionate vengeance. His words had been thrown back in scorn and derision; they had afforded a handle to

the charge of blasphemy; they had been the pretext for passing the sentence of death. The Jews had wrought their deadly purpose; they had rejoiced as their machinations succeeded; they had stood in triumph beneath the cross on which their victim hung in agony. But retribution had come. His disciples had not been crushed by the death of their Master. Jerusalem was resounding with the story of His resurrection, and now, in their very presence, this man echoes the words which had raised their anger, as a defiant truth: "I see . . . the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God."

The expression spoken is the same as that used by Christ. The title "Son of Man" was one very frequently on the lips of the Saviour. It was a name which Christ took pleasure in applying to Himself. But the sacred writers hesitate to use it when speaking of Christ. Even the three Galilean Evangelists, who delight in drawing before us the picture of the Man Christ Jesus, who show us the Christ of God suffering under human trials, giving way under human burdens, yielding to human weaknesses, moved by human emotions, shedding human tears, never give Him this specially human name, or mention it as being used of Him by others. The proto-martyr alone,

in order to bring conviction to the hearts of those who had condemned the guiltless, repeated the word of power which Christ had pronounced before His judges, and gave as His last testimony: "I see . . . the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." The Lord had said, The Son of Man shall sit on the right hand of God. St. Stephen said, I see the Son of Man *standing* on the right hand of God. The Fathers were quick to see the beautiful thought which is shown by the difference of attitude. Christ sitteth at the right hand of God in heaven; but when distress or trials are near to His servants, then the Lord Jesus sitteth no longer, but, rising up, standeth in order the better to aid and protect them. The thought is embodied in the collect for St. Stephen's day, which reminds us that the "blessed Jesus standeth at the right hand of God, to succour all those who suffer for Him." And so St. Stephen found it. True, for him there was the cruel stoning, as there had been the bitter cross for his Master. But in his death victory was sealed to the servant, as victory had been won by his Lord. "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit; and he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not

this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

Doubtless this recorded appearance of the ascended Saviour in heaven is valuable on account of the additional evidence it affords of our Lord's resurrection. But what renders this account of the manifested Lord more precious, is the attitude in which St. Stephen beheld Him. We believe "that Christ sitteth at the right hand of God;" but the thought which brings comfort, and strength, and courage to the human heart, is that the Lord Jesus standeth to succour all those who need His help. It is the objective evidence that the ascended Lord is still the Son of Man. It is the visible proof that He is the same Saviour who preached by the Lake of Galilee, and taught in the streets of Jerusalem. It is the distinct witness that He is as ready to aid and pity us now that He is in heaven, as He was to heal the sick, or restore the dying, or gladden the comfortless when He was on earth. It is the blessed assurance that we have not a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but One to whose throne of grace we can come boldly, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

The mere history of the appearance of Christ to

St. Paul may be passed over. The details of what happened on that journey to Damascus—the sudden flashing light from heaven exceeding the brightness of the sun, the falling to the earth of Saul and those who journeyed with him, the unexpected voice carrying conviction to the heart of the persecutor, the three days' blindness, the prayer, the baptism—all these things are as twice-told tales.

But there are at least two points in connection with this appearance of the ascended Lord, which are well worth serious consideration.

The appearance to St. Paul is of very great evidential value. A class of writers exist who would distinguish between what they are pleased to call subjective and objective appearances; and while they acknowledge the truth of the one, they deny the reality of the other. Dr. Carpenter, Dr. Abbot, the author of "Supernatural Religion," and Canon Freemantle are names which occur in this connection. Now had the account of the appearance to St. Stephen stood alone, and in an uninspired writing, it might be argued with plausibility that it was of a subjective character; that is to say, that it was a vision which the exalted state of Stephen's mind caused him to see. But it is difficult to hold such a theory in the

case of the appearance to St. Paul. That the Lord Jesus Christ did actually in His own proper person appear to Saul on the road to Damascus, does not rest on the mere narrative in the Acts. It does not rest only on the fact that others were affected by it, as well as the future apostle—although that is a very strong proof of its reality. The proof that the appearance was an objective fact—that Christ being risen, and having ascended into the heavens, did show Himself to St. Paul, and that Paul did behold Him, and did hear His very voice—the proof of this is to be sought, and is found, in the whole after-life of the apostle. It must have been a very strong cause which could suddenly, without previous anticipation or preparation, change this ruthless persecutor of Christ's Church into its chief sustaining pillar. And when a man like Paul—a keen reasoner, a subtle disputer, an educated scholar—declares that the cause was the appearance of the risen and ascended Lord, it seems mere incredulity to doubt his word. This incident, then, affords one of the strongest historical proofs, that our holy religion rests on a sure foundation, and that the Church has full warrant for declaring her belief that "Christ rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty."

The second thought which the appearance of our Lord to St. Paul forces on the mind is of a more practical nature. It is the same as that which meets us everywhere in the life of Christ. The object was to bring conviction to the individual. It was a personal act of grace to the man himself. Primarily, it was the rescuing of a sinful soul from error. The good Shepherd was seeking His sheep that had strayed. The after-consequences were of the most momentous kind. They issued in such an enlargement of the Church as the original apostles had never dreamed of. They caused such a wide extension of the principles of Christianity as the first followers of Christ could not grasp. They opened the door to the whole world of the Gentiles. But it is not with these consequences that the narrative occupies itself. The conversion, the prayer, the baptism of the *man;*—these are the things on which St. Luke lays stress. It is but the repetition of the appearance to St. Stephen. As Christ then appeared, standing on the right hand of God, to aid and succour His servant who was suffering for His sake, so on this occasion does the Lord Jesus manifest Himself in grace and pity, in order that He may reclaim this blasphemer and injurious to better and truer thoughts.

It is a re-acting of any one of those miracles Christ wrought on earth, when, touched with compassion at the sight of man's suffering, or moved with pity at the thought of man's sin, He put forth His hand to relieve him, or exerted His power to save him. The continuity of Christ's character is preserved. As He was on earth, so is He still in heaven.

As the direct purpose of our Lord's miracles was to give relief to those who sought His aid, as the primary object of the appearance of our Lord after His resurrection was to comfort and console His disciples, so the immediate cause of the manifestations of our Lord after His ascension was to succour, convert, or comfort those to whom He showed Himself. But beyond this primary and direct purpose there were other ends to be fulfilled. The miracles were the outward witness of the Father to the divinity of the Eternal Son; the appearances after the crucifixion were the proofs of the reality of the resurrection; and the manifestations after the ascension into heaven, were the visible tokens that Christ had not left His Church, but continued as her Head, to rule and govern her.

Christ appeared to strengthen Stephen in the hour of his martyrdom; He appeared to convert

St. Paul when his rage against His Church was at its hottest: He manifested Himself to St. John in Patmos to comfort him in the exile which he suffered for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. The individual and personal object of the manifestation must by no means be lost sight of. However wide may be our interest in the world at large, however keen may be the concern which we take in the well-being of the Church as a whole, still the centre around which each one revolves, is, undeniably, his own life, and that of those immediately dear to him. And the Bible, which recognises all truths, does not fail to apprehend this one. It gives us the history of God's Church; of its first commencement as a distinct Church by the call of Abraham; of its gradual growth and extension through the patriarchs and the Jewish people; of its first lesson in holiness through material fasting, and denial of the animal appetites; of the dawn of true spiritual life by the teaching of some inspired judge or seer, who saw more clearly than his contemporaries; of the slow advancement of the spiritual life by the music of the Psalms, and by the preaching and writings of the prophets; of the supercession of the Jewish Church by the coming of Messiah and the founding of Christi-

anity. But how is it all told? Not by essays on church government; not by abstract discussions on mental and spiritual progress; not by historical disquisitions; not by philosophising on the nature of the Godhead; not by homilies on holiness. Such things as these might, perhaps, have attracted the few, but they would have been passed over by the many. They would have awakened no interest in the minds of the mass of men and women. So a different plan altogether was pursued. The story of Abraham's life was told. Or a series of pictures were drawn in which we see God watching over Jacob; or the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt's bitter bondage was narrated. Or we read the tale of a shepherd boy who grew into the hero of his nation, and became its poet-king. Or we followed the wonderful fortunes of the grand prophet, Elijah, and saw the ravens carrying him food, and the child restored to life at his prayer, and the whole people falling prostrate as God's fire consumes his sacrifice. And so on all through the history. God's dealings with His Church are shown by the manner in which He dealt with His individual saints. The interest is always strictly personal. It is ever the story of men and women, moved by the same hopes, and fears, and passions, tried

by the same temptations, falling into the same sins, as we ourselves experience. And so it comes to pass that the Bible—which is the history of the Church—is not a book specially for scholars; but men and women of common life pore over its pages, and read it with a never-dying interest, and listen to its stories with an attention that never flags; and are moved by it to tears, and are excited by it to noble thoughts, and are stirred by it to brave deeds, and learn by its pages to struggle with constancy and to endure manfully. So it is in the example before us. We know nothing but the bare fact that St. John was an exile in the Isle of Patmos. Whether St. John enjoyed the boon of personal liberty in his banishment, or whether he was confined and subjected to harsh treatment, we know not. We do know that for the most part the life of a Roman exile was one not to be envied, and that the bare and rugged aspect of the place was in keeping with the custom of sending the condemned to the most rocky and desolate islands which could be found. Picturing to ourselves the state of St. John's mind, remembering that he was torn from all his friends, cut off from all sympathy, deprived of all that makes life worth living, we like to read that the Saviour was not unmindful of His

prisoner, and appeared from His throne in heaven, that, by the blessedness of His presence He might rejoice the heart of His servant, suffering for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Scripture, then, itself teaches us to lay much stress upon the personal aspect under which the manifestations of Christ were granted. It must not be lost sight of or forgotten. By doing so half the teaching to be derived from them would be lost, and much more than half the comfort they are designed to give. But as in giving the story of Abraham, God taught the history of His Church, the miracles, and appearances, and manifestations of Christ, pass beyond the immediate benefit which any individual may have received from them, and are the eternal inheritance of the Christian Church. By His manifestation to St. Stephen Christ sanctioned and made His own those wider views of Christianity which the martyr proclaimed, and for which he died. The results of the conversion of St. Paul by the manifestation of Christ did not stop at the personal salvation of the man, but extended themselves to all countries and to all time. And although we may rightly regard the vision of the Apocalypse as given, in the first instance,

for the special comfort of St John, yet who can estimate the influence which the Book of the Revelations may be designed to have in future ages, when its dark visions shall be made plain?

To us, indeed, its visions still remain dark. We attempt in vain to fathom the meaning which lies beneath its words of mystery. The seals on the book still remain unbroken. Few who have made any real study of the Revelation have not felt a feeling of impatience and despair come over them, as turning from one expositor to another, they found that each interpreter commenced by decrying the work of all his predecessors as conducted on wrong principles, or based on false methods of exegesis. This difference of opinion does not, however, detract from the real value of the inspired vision. It proves only that the time has not yet come for the vision to be declared. The same thing happened in the Jewish Church. To the Jews many of the inspired utterances of their prophets were dark and enigmatical. The teachers, and lawyers, and Rabbis, tried in vain to understand them. Their attempted explanations were false, and wide of the true meaning of the text. But with the coming of Christ and the preaching of the Gospel, the veil was lifted. The smallest Christian child understands the

meaning of the seventh chapter of Isaiah, which Jewish scribes could, at best, only very partially comprehend. The Ethiopian eunuch could not think of whom the prophet spoke, as of a lamb led to the slaughter, but the simplest Christian sees now in the passage a prophecy of the sufferings and death of the Messiah. Some Old Testament writings still remain dark, as those of Zechariah or Daniel. But as the history of the Church, unfolding itself, has already shed light upon much prophecy which was once obscure, so as time rolls on, and the fulfilment is accomplished, shall the Holy Spirit open men's minds to see and understand those visions which the ascended Saviour unfolded to His disciple, and which, until the fulness of time shall come, God has purposely left shrouded in mystery.

These appearances, then, of the Risen Lord are a most precious legacy to His Church. They are of great evidential value. They are direct evidence of what Scripture elsewhere declares, viz. :—the continuity of Christ's character. The Christ who lived on earth, who died, who rose again, is still the same Christ now that He has ascended into the heavens. But they contain a deeper truth. For these manifestations of the ascended Christ are types and examples of the way in which He is

ever acting. Each unit in the world's vast extension is dear to the heart of the Saviour as the saint on whose head a halo rests. If Christ appeared to uphold His martyr in his agony, if the heavens opened that St. Paul might behold Him whom he had persecuted, if the vision of Christ was granted to St. John that he might be comforted in his rough island home, we may be sure that the same Christ—unchanging and unchangeable—exists for us, and that when our hour of need shall come, we may by the eye of faith behold Him *standing* at the right hand of God, in order that He may succour and defend us.

XVI.

CONCLUSION.

Thus have we passed in review the mental characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ, as they are manifested forth in His life. We have seen that He was man; the human son of a human mother; bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh; not ashamed that a common nature should enable Him to call us brethren. We have marked how the same feelings and motives, which regulate man's conduct, guided and directed the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have noted how the hopes and desires, which influence man's actions, exerted their full sway over His mind. We have not been afraid to acknowledge that the very weaknesses (apart from sin) which belong to human nature, had their counterpart in Him; that He was moved by fear, that He shrank from pain, that He felt dread and shrinking in the view of death. Hunger and thirst, weakness and lassitude,

fatigue and nervous exhaustion belonged to His nature, as they form part of ours.

Each page, as we wrote on, gathered some brightness, because it could not fail to be illuminated with the light of His tender compassion and of His never-wearying pity; just as each page of the sacred story itself glows with the glory His mercy sheds upon it. His sympathy with human suffering, and His pain at the world's sorrow, were never far from the heart of Christ. But underneath the pity, and born of the intenseness of the sympathy, lay a deep horror of human sin, which now and then broke out in scathing words of condemnation, when religious hypocrisy, or an affectation of pretended piety, stirred him to sorrowful anger. The manliness and courage of His character, although to a great extent masked by the meekness and humility which belonged to the human nature of the Son of Man, asserted itself, when factious opposition to good called for rebuke, or when danger, or death itself, had to be faced. The intrinsic beauty of His mind manifested itself in the unequalled beauty of form and style in which His teaching clothed itself, and which added a wonderful charm to the deep thoughtfulness and intense purity which are the chief characteristics of that divine

philosophy we call is the Christian religion. And over all, apparent in every action He performed, manifesting itself unconsciously in almost every word He uttered, impressing itself upon His disciples without their understanding it, and filling His adversaries with an awe they could not account for, was the transcendent glory of the Divine nature, which the low estate He had adopted could not hide, and which belonged to Him inherently as the Son of God.

And thus we have a picture of the God-man, bringing with Him to earth pardon and atonement, revealing to man the Fathername of God, making much that is dark clear, strengthening our resolution for good, raising our hopes, animating our affections. We have a Saviour, who has not only given us the example of His life in order that we may follow it; who was not only content to be betrayed into the hands of sinful men, and to suffer death for our sakes upon the cross; but who has risen from the dead, and has ascended into the heavens, and who liveth ever at the right hand of the Father's majesty, in order that, continuing the work He commenced on earth, He may be to all everlasting ages the merciful and compassionate High Priest of all those who seek His grace.

"Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify His glorious name, evermore praising Him, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory: Glory be to Thee, O Lord, most High. Amen."

THE END.

PRINTED BY BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO.
EDINBURGH AND LONDON.

NISBET'S THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY.

THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO TIMOTHY: A Popular Commentary. With a Series of Forty Sermonettes. By ALFRED ROWLAND, LL.B., B.A. (Lond.) Extra crown 8vo, 6s.

"The Commentary contains apt and pithy remarks; the sermonettes are both instructive and edifying."—*Christian Advocate.*

NON-BIBLICAL SYSTEMS OF RELIGION. By Archdeacon FARRAR, D.D., Canon RAWLINSON, Rev. W. WRIGHT, D.D., Rabbi G. J. EMANUEL, B.A., Sir WILLIAM MUIR, and others. Extra crown 8vo, 6s.

"The men who have written upon the various departments of the book are among the most capable, and what they have stated is likely to prove not only interesting, but of the highest value to the cause of religion."—*Christian Commonwealth.*

CHRISTIANITY AND EVOLUTION: Modern Problems of the Faith. By the Revs. G. MATHESON, D.D., T. FOWLE, M.A., Sir GEORGE W. COX, M.A., Professor MOMERIE, LL.D., and others. Extra crown 8vo, 6s.

"There is a reasonable unity in the subject 'Christianity and Evolution,' and each writer takes up a distinct side of this subject, and treats it always intelligently and in a proper spirit, sometimes (particularly in the earlier articles) with really striking ability and acuteness."—*Literary Churchman.*

THE CHRISTIAN FULFILMENTS AND USES OF THE LEVITICAL SIN-OFFERING. By the Rev. HENRY BATCHELOR. Extra crown 8vo, 5s.

"This is no ordinary production, but the outcome of patient study and vigorous thought by one who may well claim to be a competent scholar and a sound theologian. Mr. Batchelor has in this careful treatise exposed the gross caricatures of the Catholic doctrine, more particularly in the cases of the Revs. F. D. Maurice and F. W. Robertson."—*Ecclesiastical Gazette.*

THE ATONEMENT: A Symposium. By Archdeacon FARRAR, D.D., Professor ABRAHAMS, Rev. Dr. LITTLEDALE, Rev. G. W. OLVER, Principal RAINY, D.D., the BISHOP OF AMYCLA, and others. Crown 8vo, 6s.

"We recommend our readers to purchase the work. Although the papers are naturally argumentative and not devotional, the record of the efforts of different minds to grasp the doctrine of the Atonement cannot but be helpful."—*Literary Churchman.*

INSPIRATION: A Symposium on In what Sense and Within what Limits is the Bible the Word of God? By Archdeacon FARRAR, the Revs. Principal CAIRNS, Professor STANLEY LEATHES, D.D., and others. Crown 8vo, 6s.

"The volume is an interesting one, written throughout in a temperate and scholarly spirit, and likely to prove useful to the higher stamp of theological students."—*Church Times.*

IMMORTALITY: A Symposium on What are the Foundations of the Belief in the Immortality of Man? By the Rev. Prebendary ROW, M.A., Rabbi HERMANN ADLER, Professor G. G. STOKES, F.R.S., Rev. Canon KNOX-LITTLE, Rev. EDWARD WHITE, and others. Crown 8vo, 6s.

"A work of great and absorbing interest, marked by extreme ability."—*Literary Churchman.*

THE PATRIARCHAL TIMES. By the Rev. THOMAS WHITELAW, D.D. Crown 8vo, 6s.

"The essays form individually and as a whole an articulated chain of reasoning, the charm of which consists in the fact, that having presented to the reader a convincing conclusion, it leaves him in a state of wonder that he had never arrived there on his own account."—*Record.*

FUTURE PROBATION: A Symposium on the Question, "Is Salvation Possible after Death?" By the Rev. STANLEY LEATHES, D.D., Principal J. CAIRNS, D.D., LL.D., Rev. EDWARD WHITE, Rev. STOPFORD BROOKE, M.A., Rev. Dr. LITTLEDALE, Right Rev. the BISHOP OF AMYCLA, &c. Crown 8vo, 6s.

"This volume deals with a subject of profound and awful moment, and the papers as a whole are written with considerable ability."—*Literary Churchman.*

"To men afflicted with the 'malady of thought' this book will prove delightful reading; and to men not so afflicted, we hope it will carry the infection."—*Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette.*

ZECHARIAH: His Visions and His Warnings. By the Rev. W. Lindsay Alexander, D.D. Crown 8vo, 6s.

"Those who have found difficulty in grasping the brief and mysterious parables of the Hebrew Prophet, will derive great help in their study of this prophecy from Dr. Alexander's careful and painstaking discussion."—*Literary Churchman.*

"The exposition of the Prophet's meaning in reference to his own age is sober and sound; and the bearing of the writing upon the Church in all ages, and the spiritual import of the imagery and the history are excellently brought out and illustrated."—*Church Bells.*

DANIEL I.—VI.: An Exposition of the Historical Portion of the Writings of the Prophet Daniel. By the Very Rev. R. Payne Smith, D.D., Dean of Canterbury. Crown 8vo, 6s.

"These papers are of sterling value, and cover much ground that is imperfectly known, or not known at all, even by Biblical students who are not, so to speak, specialists in this department of antiquities. No one could possibly read this volume without adding greatly to their knowledge of this important prophecy."—*Literary Churchman.*

"The author keeps the spiritual element constantly before the mind, and brings out in a most natural and interesting manner many useful lessons that are latent in the narrative."—*Record.*

FOUR CENTURIES OF SILENCE; or, From Malachi to Christ. By the Rev. R. A. Redford, M.A., LL.B., Professor of Systematic Theology and Apologetics, New College, London. Crown 8vo, 6s.

"Carefully and intelligently done. The critical views expressed appear to us generally just. His account of Philo is particularly good."—*Literary Churchman.*

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN. An Exposition with Homiletical Treatment. By the Rev. J. J. Lias, M.A. 7s. 6d.

"One of the most beautiful, instructive, and edifying expositions of St. John's First Epistle we have ever seen. Mr. Lias seems to us to have entered into the very heart of St. John's Divine Theology. We know of no book that throws more light upon the teaching of the Apostle whom Jesus loved. It responds to some of the holiest aspirations of the Christian soul."—*Methodist Times.*

"There are some good things in the volume which (so far as our knowledge reaches) are not to be found elsewhere."—*Classical Review.*

NEW AND RECENT WORKS

ON

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE.

ST. PAUL IN ATHENS: The City and the Discourse. By the Rev. J. R. MACDUFF, D.D. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo, 3s. 6d.

WORD STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: The Synoptic Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles of SS. Peter, James, and Jude. By MARVIN R. VINCENT, D.D., Author of "Gates into the Psalm Country," &c. 8vo, 16s.

"The author aims in the first place to give the *history of words*, to show through what stages a given word has attained the meaning in which it is used in Scripture, and how these stages have grown successively out of each other; then to show, at least in part, the *peculiar form* in which a thought came to a Greek mind, which means very much more than an acquaintance with grammatical idioms. . . . In a thousand instances, it is not too much to say, the reader who is acquainted with English only will find himself led beneath the surface of the text, and made aware of felicities of language wholly undreamt of before, of historical associations belonging to words, of Eastern usages or religious customs, which will vastly widen and deepen the meaning and force of this or that passage."—*Literary Churchman.*

THE COVENANT OF PEACE. By MARVIN R. VINCENT, D.D. Extra crown 8vo, 6s.

"This volume endeavours to deal, in a direct and practical fashion, with certain hard, painful, and puzzling phases of Christian experience, and with certain mischievous mistakes in popular Christian conceptions of duty and of privilege. It is for the tempted, the unsuccessful, the discouraged, and the weary; for souls fighting for life and victory under the burden of infirmity and the sting of sorrow."

NOTES ON SOME UNFULFILLED PROPHECIES, indicating the Probable Relation between England and Egypt in the Last Days. By a LAYMAN of the CHURCH of ENGLAND. Demy 8vo, 8s. 6d.

BRITAIN IN HISTORY, ANCIENT AND MODERN; or, Proofs Linking Israel with Britain throughout the Ages. By Mrs. G. ALBERT ROGERS, Author of "The Coronation Stone," &c. Crown 8vo, 3s. 6d.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER. I. THE REAL PRESENCE. II. THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE. By J. J. STEWART PEROWNE, D.D., Dean of Peterborough. 16mo, 1s.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NEW BIRTH. By JOHN EDWIN BRIGG, Vicar of Hepworth, near Huddersfield. Crown 8vo, 2s.

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA: Shadowing Forth the Fulness of Christian Blessing in Christ. By H. FORBES WITHERBY. Small crown 8vo, 3s. 6d.

A COMMENTARY ON LEVITICUS, EXPOSITORY AND PRACTICAL. With Critical Notes. By ANDREW A. BONAR, D.D. 8vo, 8s. 6d.

ABRAHAM THE FRIEND OF GOD: A Study from Old Testament History. By J. OSWALD DYKES, D.D. Third Thousand. Post 8vo, 6s.

THE MANIFESTO OF THE KING. Comprising "The Beatitudes of the Kingdom," "The Laws of the Kingdom," and "The Relation of the Kingdom to the World." By J. OSWALD DYKES, D.D. Crown 8vo, 6s.

CLOUDS CLEARED: A Few Hard Subjects of New Testament Teaching Explained. By the Rev. CLAUDE SMITH BIRD, M.A. Small crown 8vo, 2s.

FOR THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY: A Manual of Homiletical and Pastoral Theology. By W. G. BLAIKIE, D.D., LL.D. Fourth Edition. Crown 8vo, 5s.

CHRIST AND CHRISTIANITY: Studies in Christology, Creeds and Confessions, Protestantism and Romanism, Reformation Principles, Sunday Observance, Religious Freedom and Christian Union. By PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D. Demy 8vo, 10s. 6d.

THE PUBLIC MINISTRY AND PASTORAL METHODS OF OUR LORD. By W. G. BLAIKIE, D.D., LL.D. Crown 8vo, 6s.

SCRIPTURE ITSELF THE ILLUSTRATOR: A Manual of Illustrations Gathered from Scriptural Figures, Phrases, Types, Derivations, Chronology, Texts, &c. By the Rev. G. S. BOWES, B.A. Small crown 8vo, 3s. 6d.

ILLUSTRATIVE TEXTS AND TEXTS ILLUSTRATED. By the Rev. J. W. BARDSLEY, D.D. Crown 8vo, 5s.

GLIMPSES THROUGH THE VEIL; or, Some Natural Analogies and Bible Types. By the Rev. J. W. BARDSLEY, D.D. Crown 8vo, 5s.

SCRIPTURAL STUDIES. By the Rev. CHARLES BRIDGES, M.A. With Preface by the Right Rev. E. H. BICKERSTETH, D.D., Bishop of Exeter. Tenth Edition. Crown 8vo, 2s. 6d.

THE SELF-REVEALING JEHOVAH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT THE CHRIST OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. By S. M. BARCLAY. Demy 8vo, 7s. 6d.

AN EXPOSITORY COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

By the Rev. A. R. FAUSSET, D.D., Canon of York, Editor of Bengel's "Gnomon" in English, and Author in part of the "Critical and Experimental Commentary." Demy 8vo, 10s. 6d.

"The work will stand critical examination as to its contents, and also bear comparison with recent scholarly contributions in the same department. The exegetical matter is excellent. Seldom do we meet with an amount of knowledge compressed into so few words, and so much to the purpose." —*Clergyman's Magazine.*

"A sensible and valuable book, calculated to render to the preacher important help in his work of preparation for the pulpit."—*Literary Churchman.*

"The teacher and preacher cannot fail to profit from its exhaustive treatment of the subject, its suggestiveness, the vast store of information here accumulated, and the flood of light shed upon the period of the Judges; whilst its deeply practical and experimental treatment of the history will render it eminently useful to the general reader."—*Churchman.*

HORÆ PSALMICÆ. STUDIES IN THE CL. PSALMS: Their Undesigned Coincidence with the Independent Scripture Histories Confirming and Illustrating Both. By the Rev. A. R. FAUSSET, D.D., Canon of York, &c. Second Edition. Demy 8vo, 10s. 6d.

"This excellent work is clear, minutely critical, and pointed, and presents a capital example of analytical and synthetical criticism. Under the able instruction of Canon Fausset, the Psalms, when brought together in families, appear to have new life and interest."—*Clergyman's Magazine.*

"Both works (on the Judges and the Psalms) show a masterly hand, and they will be valued by thoughtful students."—Mr. C. H. SPURGEON in the *Sword and Trowel.*

"The general plan of the lectures is very good. The author groups together a number of Psalms which he supposes to belong to a certain period, or to be connected with a particular incident, and brings out the hidden connection between them and the history."—*Church Bells.*

METAPHORS IN THE GOSPELS: A Series of Short Studies. By the Rev. DONALD FRASER, D.D. Crown 8vo, 6s.

"An attempt to fill a real gap in exegetical literature. It has a value of its own, and will be helpful to preachers and Bible class teachers. The metaphors are plainly and sensibly handled, with a keen eye to their practical application to daily life."—*Church Times.*

"Dr. Fraser has struck new ground, and has compiled an instructive and useful volume."—*Saturday Review.*

"In these 'short studies' Dr. Fraser has concentrated an amazing amount of valuable teaching."—*Christian.*

SYNOPTICAL LECTURES ON THE BOOKS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE. By the Rev. DONALD FRASER, D.D. New and thoroughly revised Edition. Two vols., extra crown 8vo, 15s.

"The author has availed himself of the most recent results of Biblical criticism, and especially of the new meanings assigned to many passages in the Revised Version. The book is eminently a scholarly and thoughtful exposition."—*Scotsman.*

"Good, solid reading, calculated to give a sound, clear, harmonious knowledge of the various parts of the Sacred Scriptures."—Mr. SPURGEON in the *Sword and Trowel.*

"As an aid to the systematic study of Holy Scripture, we cannot too highly recommend Dr. Fraser's Synoptical Lectures. Of the whole work it is not too much to say that the more minutely we examine it, the more evident is its value to the Biblical student."—*John Bull.*

THE EMPIRE OF THE HITTITES. By WM. WRIGHT, D.D. With Decipherment of Hittite Inscriptions by Professor SAYCE, LL.D., &c. &c. Second Edition, Revised, with Additions and Twenty-seven Plates. Royal 8vo, 17s. 6d.

"In thanking Dr. Wright for his seasonable publication, it must be acknowledged not only that he may claim the credit of having been the first to advance the hypothesis of the Hittite origin of the Hamathite inscriptions, but also that the world is indebted to him for the zeal and tact which he displayed in rescuing from impending destruction some of the most valuable inscriptions which we possess, and in securing casts of them for the British Museum."—*Athenæum.*

"To us by far the most important results of the researches set forth in this volume, and for which all Christendom owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Wright, is the proof from Egyptian and Assyrian records, and from Hittite monuments, that in every single instance in which the nation is mentioned in Scripture, we have now contemporary and incontrovertible side-evidence from independent authorities, of the perfect harmony of every allusion in Holy Writ with the existing condition of the political world at that period."—Canon TRISTRAM, D.D., in *The Churchman.*

BIBLICAL TOPOGRAPHY. By the Rev. GEORGE RAWLINSON, M.A., Canon of Canterbury, &c. Crown 8vo, 2s. 6d.

"In an attractive and clear style a great deal of information is conveyed as to the supposed 'Site of Paradise,' on the 'Early Cities of Babylonia,' the 'Chief Cities of Ancient Assyria,' 'Sites connected with Abraham,' and 'Egyptian Cities of Zoan, Pithom, Mizdal, Memphis, Thebes, and Syone."—*Jewish World.*

"Learned and orthodox."—*British Weekly.*

THE HEBREW FEASTS IN RELATION TO RECENT CRITICAL HYPOTHESES REGARDING THE PENTATEUCH. By the Rev. W. H. GREEN, D.D. (Edin.) Crown 8vo, 5s.

"This volume is directed especially against the destructive criticism of Reuss, Wellhausen, and Kuenen upon the date, unity, and authenticity of the Pentateuch. Dr. Green brings ability, learning, and critical faculty to the task he has undertaken, and has presented a strong case for the Conservative view."—*Church Times.*

"Lectures of remarkable ability, written in excellent taste and style. Dr. Green sends a fresh blast of common sense through the 'wood of error,' and it is really marvellous how before it the air clears and phantoms disappear."—*Literary Churchman.*

THE JEWS; or, Prediction and Fulfilment. An Argument for the Times. By the Rev. S. H. KELLOG, D.D. New Edition. Crown 8vo, 4s. 6d.

"The aim of this very interesting book is to show that the position and history of the Jewish Church prove indisputably the truth and inspiration of Holy Scripture."—*Record.*

"No writer on the subject has marshalled the facts with greater skill, or applied a more trenchant logical faculty to their consideration."—*Christian Leader.*

THE NATURAL ELEMENTS OF REVEALED THEOLOGY. By the Rev. GEORGE MATHESON, D.D., Author of "Moments on the Mount, &c. Crown 8vo, 6s.

"An exceedingly able discussion of the basis to be found in the natural instincts of the human mind for the doctrine of Christianity."—*Athenæum.*

THE TEACHING OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES. A Page of First Century Christian Life, with Translation, Notes, and Dissertations. By Very Rev. H. D. M. SPENCE, D.D., Dean of Gloucester. Crown 8vo, 6s.

"Dr. Spence's notes are generally excellent. The excursus in this volume is an able though far from exhaustive treatment of the several points of interest raised by this treatise."—*Academy.*

"A welcome relief from much of the thin religious literature of the present day."—*Westminster Review.*

MODERN ATHEISM; or, The Heavenly Father. By M. ERNEST NAVILLE. Translated by the Rev. HENRY DOWNTON. Crown 8vo, 6s.

"So far as modern atheism is concerned, this is just the book to put into the hands of men who read and think."—*Churchman.*

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRISTIANITY. By the Rev. Stanley Leathes, D.D., Professor of Hebrew, King's College. Crown 8vo, 6s.

"The Appendix is specially interesting and worthy of the author's high reputation. The book supplies a want which is often felt."—*Record.*

"A valuable addition to the class of literature which is needed to meet the captious criticism that characterises so much the tone of thought in the present day. The captious critic is here met on his own ground, and is shown that even if his objections are taken for granted, the great truths of Christianity are in no way affected thereby."—*Church Times.*

ALIKE AND PERFECT; or, God's Three Revelations. By the Rev. C. A. Williams. Crown 8vo, 3s. 6d.

"In harmonising God's revelation of Himself in the spheres of Creation, Providence, and the Divine Word, the author avoids much of the argumentation we are accustomed to on this theme, and leads us into tracts of thought at once suggestive and impressive."—*Presbyterian Magazine.*

ROCK *VERSUS* SAND; or, The Foundations of the Christian Faith. By J. Monro Gibson, D.D. Small crown 8vo, 1s. 6d.

"Dr. Gibson, adopting the architectonic symbolism of a house, discourses on the foundation and structure of Christian character and life. The foundation is God; the Chief Corner Stone, God in Christ; the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, God in Christ made known by the Prophets. It is an Apologia for Christianity, and deals with the popular infidel objections of the day. Dr. Gibson is an acute observer and a cogent reasoner. His little book is strong and timely."—*British Quarterly Review.*

THE BIBLE TRUE TO ITSELF. A Treatise on the Historical Truth of the Old Testament. By the Rev. A. Moody Stuart, D.D. New Edition. Crown 8vo, 5s.

"The argument is elaborate, both in plan and execution. The four principal topics are Deuteronomy, the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, the order of the Old Testament development, and the unity of Isaiah. The volume is a profitable one both for head and heart."—*London Quarterly Review.*

CHRISTIANITY, SCIENCE, AND INFIDELITY. A Vindication of the Received Truths of our Common Faith. Showing the Follies and Absurdities of Atheism. By the Rev. William Hillier, Mus. Doc. Second Edition. Crown 8vo, 2s.

"Mr. Hillier's treatment of his important subject is lucid and careful, and his book should be of help in forming opinion."—*Literary World.*

Crown 8vo, 2s. 6d. each.

THE MEN OF THE BIBLE.

1. ABRAHAM: His Life and Times. By the Rev. W. J. DEANE, M.A.
2. MOSES: His Life and Times. By the Rev. GEORGE RAWLINSON, M.A., Canon of Canterbury, &c.
3. SOLOMON: His Life and Times. By the Ven. F. W. FARRAR, D.D., Archdeacon and Canon of Westminster.
4. ELIJAH: His Life and Times. By the Rev. Professor W. MILLIGAN, D.D.

Preparing for Publication.

ISAIAH. By the Rev. Canon DRIVER, M.A.
JEREMIAH. By the Rev. Canon T. K. CHEYNE, D.D.
DANIEL. By the Rev. H. DEANE, D.D.
SAMUEL AND SAUL. By the Rev. W. J. DEANE, M.A.
GIDEON. By the Rev. J. M. LANG, D.D.
JESUS THE DIVINE MAN. By the Rev. F. J. VALLINGS, M.A.

THE BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR;

Or, Anecdotes, Similes, Emblems, Illustrations, Expository, Scientific, Geographical, Historical, and Homiletic. Gathered from a Wide Range of Home and Foreign Literature on the Verses of the Bible. By the Rev. JOSEPH S. EXELL, M.A. ST. MATTHEW, 1 vol., demy 8vo, 7s. 6d. (*Ready*). —ST. MARK, 1 vol., demy 8vo, 6s. (*Shortly*).

Complete in Six Volumes, 8vo, 16s. each.

THIRTY THOUSAND THOUGHTS.

On all Subjects:	*Edited by*	*From all Sources:*
Theological.	The Dean of GLOUCESTER.	Patristic.
Philosophical.	Rev. J. S. EXELL, M.A.,	Mediæval.
Biographical.	and	Puritanic.
Practical.	Rev. CHARLES NEIL, M.A.	Modern.
Ethical.		Foreign.
Biblical.	With Introduction by	Scientific.
Ecclesiastical.	Very Rev. Dean HOWSON, D.D.	Classical, &c.

"As an illustrative dictionary or common-place book it will secure a first position amongst works of this class. Its homiletical use will soon be discovered, and the skill of its arrangement utilised by many who are brought to face the controversies of the day."—*Church Times.*

THE HOMILETICAL LIBRARY. Edited by the Very Rev. H. D. M. SPENCE, D.D., Dean of Gloucester, and the Rev. J. S. EXELL, M.A. Four Vols., demy 8vo, 7s. 6d. each.

CONTENTS:—Vol. I. Advent, Christmas, The Close and Commencement of the Year.—Vol. II. Epiphany, Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima.—Vol. III. Lent, Easter, Easter Day, Sundays after Easter, Ascension, Whitsunday.—Vol. IV. Sundays in Trinity.

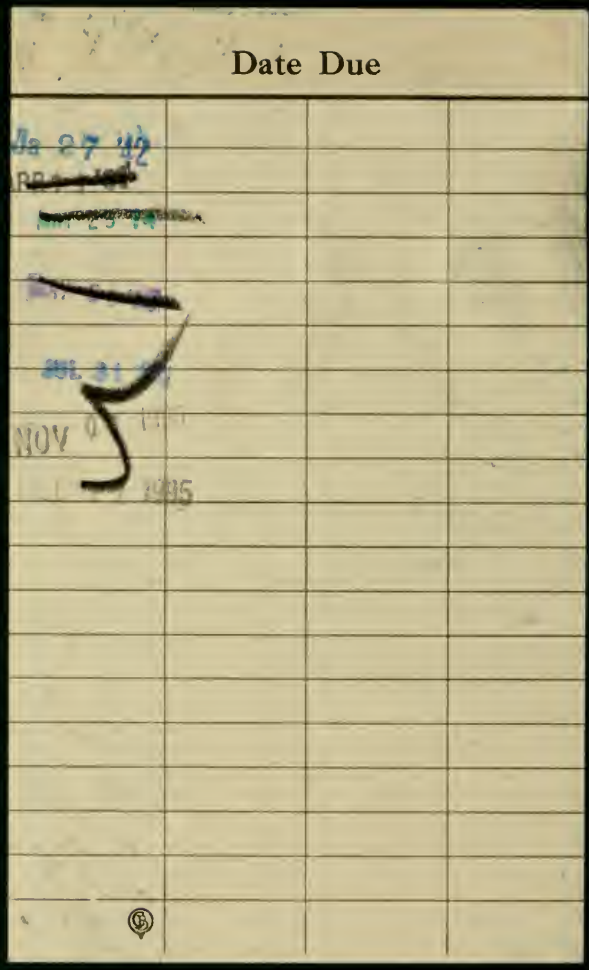
"Of all the books of this character published in this country, the present must take its place in the first rank. We cannot speak too highly of this whole series. They are the work of thoroughly competent men, who are sparing no pains to present our ministers of religion with an equipment of the most serviceable order for the work of the pulpit and the Bible class."—*Liverpool Mercury.*

THE HOMILETIC MAGAZINE. Vol. XVII. 8vo, 7s. 6d.

"This Magazine, intended primarily for the use of those who have to prepare sermons, contains also much that is of value to the student, and of interest to the general reader. The papers in each number are classified under four heads: Theological, Expository, Homiletical, and Miscellaneous."—*Rock.*

Published Monthly, price 1s. Annual Subscription, 12s., post free.

LONDON: JAMES NISBET & CO., 21 BERNERS STREET.


Date Due
NOV

BS2421 .B51
The mental characteristics of the Lord
Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library
1 1012 00055 8413